



# UNIVERSIDAD ESPECIALIZADA DE LAS AMÉRICAS

College of Special Education and Pedagogy

School of Pedagogy

Degree work submitted to achieve the bachelor's degree

in

English Language Teaching

THESIS

Literary Analysis of the Major Themes Introduced by Nicholas Sparks in his Novels *A Walk to Remember*, *The Notebook*, *The Guardian*, *The Wedding*, and *The Last Song*

By:

Valderrama Pinilla, Gloria del Carmen 8-912-2383

Advisor:  
Rodrigo De León

Panamá, 2019

## **DEDICATION**

I want to dedicate this work to my big angel in heaven, my mother, who always takes care of me; to my aunt, Zelfa Pinilla, who is more than an aunt for always shows me her unconditional love and support in everything, to my father who is my guide in everything I do, to my grandmother, Celmira Leon, for always being there when I need her and finally to my dear siblings, Mariela del Carmen and Gerardo Antonio, who I love with all my heart.

Gloria Valderrama

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I want to give my thanks to God because without Him, nothing of this would have been possible. I also want to give thanks to all the teachers who taught me with their patience and dedication and inspired me to give my best effort in all I did; besides, they have been a reminder of why I decided to study this career that has been better than I expected.

Gloria Valderrama

## SUMMARY

Through writing, people express their thoughts and emotions. Authors have used this means to express their feelings in different scenarios. They write what affects them in real life. They create an imaginary world to escape from reality, and in this way, get rid of their worries and free their souls. Authors have used Literature through drama, poetry, short stories, or novels to fascinate the world by sending their message to the readers.

The present work consists of a literary analysis of the themes of love, death, and faith introduced by Nicholas Sparks in his novels *A Walk to Remember*, *The Notebook*, *The Guardian*, *The Wedding*, and *The Last Song*. In these novels, the theme of love between characters in fraternal and romantic relationships are presented in order to demonstrate how magical this feeling can be that can transform people's lives and make us feel immensely happy by changing our lives positively. Then the analysis of the theme of death is given to prove that no one is exempt from it and that even though it will take from us the people we love, we must assimilate it as something normal, part of the cycle of life and a means to reach eternity. Then, the theme of faith is introduced to let us know how important faith is to get what we want in life if we firmly believe in it. Through this thesis it is demonstrating that literature is also a good way to express emotions through language.

## ABSTRACT

A través de la escritura, las personas expresan sus pensamientos y emociones. Los autores han utilizado este medio para expresar sus sentimientos internos en diferentes escenarios. Escriben lo que les afecta en la vida real. Crean un mundo imaginario para escapar de la realidad y, de esta manera, deshacerse de sus preocupaciones y liberar sus almas. Los autores han utilizado la literatura a través del drama, la poesía, los cuentos o las novelas para fascinar al mundo enviando su mensaje a los lectores.

El presente trabajo consiste en un análisis literario de los temas de amor, muerte y fe presentados por Nicholas Sparks en sus novelas *A Walk to Remember*, *The Notebook*, *The Guardian*, *The Wedding* y *The Last Song*. En estas novelas se presenta el tema del amor entre personajes en relaciones fraternales y románticas para demostrar cuán mágico puede ser este sentimiento que puede transformar la vida de las personas y hacernos sentir inmensamente felices al cambiar nuestras vidas de manera positiva; luego se analiza el tema de la muerte para demostrar que nadie está exento de ella y que, aunque nos quitará a las personas que amamos, debemos asimilarlo como algo normal, parte del ciclo de la vida y un medio para llegar a la eternidad. Seguidamente se introduce el tema de la fe para hacernos saber cuán importante es la fe para obtener lo que queremos en la vida si creemos firmemente en ella, demostrando así que la literatura es el medio para expresar emociones a través del lenguaje.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CHAPTER I: GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE WORK.</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1 Key Words	11
1.2 Palabras Claves	12
1.3 Research Questions	13
1.4 Justification	14
1.5 Objectives	15
General Objectives:	15
Specific Objectives:	15
1.6 Kind of Study	16
<b>CHAPTER II: THE LIFE AND LITERARY CAREER OF NICHOLAS SPARKS</b>	<b>18</b>
I. The Life of Nicholas Sparks	18
II. The Literary Career of Nicholas Sparks	22
<b>CHAPTER III: LITERARY CRITICISM</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>CHAPTER IV: CRITICISM ABOUT OTHER AUTHORS</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>CHAPTER V. THEMES IN NICHOLAS SPARKS' NOVELS</b>	<b>35</b>
5.1 Love Theme in <i>The Notebook</i>	35
5.2 Love Theme in <i>The Wedding</i>	42
5.3 Love Theme in <i>A Walk to Remember</i>	49
5.4 Love Theme in <i>The Guardian</i>	60

5.5 Theme of Faith in The Notebook	67
5.6 Theme of Faith in The Wedding	70
5.7 Theme of Faith in A Walk to Remember	72
5.8 Theme of Faith in The Guardian	77
5.9 Theme of Faith in The Last Song	78
5.10 Theme of Sickness and Death	81
<b>CHAPTER VI: LITERARY DEVICES</b>	<b>84</b>
6.1. Setting	84
6.2 Symbols	86
6.3 Ironies	92
6.4 <i>Allusions</i>	94
6.5. Comparisons	96
6.7. Simile	97
6.8 Point of view	98
6.10 Conflict	99
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>ANNEX</b>	<b>108</b>

# CHAPTER I



## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the present work is to present a critical analysis of the themes of love, death, and faith introduced by Nicholas Sparks in his novels and to stand out the most relevant aspects of his literary production.

To reach the aim, the life and literary career of Sparks were researched. Several books and articles about him together with various of his romantic novels carefully read, selected and studied.

While advancing in the research, it was evident that some novels were essential to complete the task. The novels chosen were *The Notebook*, *The Wedding*, *A Walk to Remember*, *The Guardian* and *The Last Song* because they had all these elements perfectly well combined.

The Notebook was his first written novel. This novel talks about the essence of those central themes that he usually uses in his previous novels as love, death, and faith.

This novel made Nicholas Sparks famous with his first emblematic topic about love. Then, *The Wedding* was included to form part of this research because it presents a motivating love theme and explains the importance of keeping love alive to avoid a divorce.

This novel introduces two new characters who were not in the previous one. It is narrated by Jane, Allie and Noah's daughter. Here the author lets the audience know about further details that had never seen before.

We will also be meditating some themes through the analysis of the novel *A Walk to Remember* which is a novel that shows a touching deep love story

but at the same time a heartbreaking death theme that teaches us that life is nothing less than a leap of faith.

In the novel "The Guardian" we can appreciate the success the author had when combining the themes of love and life, lessons such as being careful while we are taking second chances in romantic relationships and choosing carefully and with intelligence.

Finally, The Last Song presents a love theme between family and friends and the importance of forgiving.

Among the different contemporary fiction writers, Nicholas Sparks was chosen to carry on this research for many reasons: his stories have always been bestsellers, the themes that he always uses change the perspective to see certain aspects of life, he is a prolific writer whose stories have been so realistic that some of them have been successfully adapted to films and TV programs.

Through fiction writers create a world of emotions that can help readers escape from their busy and complicated world to enter into a new life experience, to liberate their lives from the burden of everyday problems, maybe the same problems that are affecting them but in a different perspective. Sometimes, readers find the answers they need through reading, sometimes they only want to entertain themselves through fiction, but what is interesting is that in literature people can find that refuge where a person can safely stay to visit and experience different worlds.

## **CHAPTER I: GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE WORK.**

### 1.1 Key Words

Keywords are essential instruments for all work because they bring a brief idea about the content of a work. To continue, we proceed to mention the keywords that were fundamental guidance for the realization of this work.

1. Themes: the central, underlying meaning or main idea of a literary work.
2. Characters: a person or animal presented in a literary work.
3. Analysis: separation of anything into its parts or elements to find out what it is made of.
4. Research: act of hunting carefully for facts or truth.

## 1.2 Palabras Claves

Las palabras clave son instrumentos esenciales para todo trabajo porque brinda una idea sobre el contenido de un trabajo. Para continuar, se procederá a mencionar las palabras claves que serán guías fundamentales para la realización de este trabajo.

1. Temas: El significado central subyacente o idea principal de una obra literaria.
2. Personajes: una persona o animal presentado en una obra literaria.
3. Análisis: separación de cualquier cosa en sus partes o elementos para descubrir de qué está hecho.
4. Investigación: acto de buscar cuidadosamente hechos o verdad.
5. Novelas: una obra en prosa ficticia. En términos generales, una novela está escrita para entretener, presentar un tema o dar un trasfondo histórico.

### 1.3 Research Questions

- What is Nicholas Sparks' narrative style like in his novels?
- What settings were used by Nicholas Sparks in his novels?
- Which literary devices were introduced by Nicholas Sparks in his novels?
- How are the characters by Nicholas Sparks in his novels developed? Do characters change or stay the same?
- How does Nicholas Sparks interpret the characters and themes in his novels?

## 1.4 Justification

Nicholas Sparks became one of the most well-read writers on romantic novels in the 20th century. He has been characterized by using themes that present the deepest feelings of love, death, and faith, among others, inside all his novels, but there is a theme that he used and that he considers the center of everything: love. For this reason, it is very intriguing and significant to analyze and discover why this author uses these kinds of themes throughout his literary productions.

In order to understand better Nicholas Sparks' way of writing, we need to take into consideration many details as his personal life, style, and way of thinking, as well as his social, and cultural background. Sometimes, we do not know what is behind a book or what is behind its writer. We could say that maybe we do not appreciate a literary production because we are not informed about how significant it is. On the other hand, we will describe the themes, settings, styles, elements, symbols, ironies, similes, points of view in order to stand out the interest about this critical North American writer.

So, to understand it, an analysis of the major themes introduced by Nicholas Sparks in his novels *A Walk to Remember*, *The Notebook*, *The Guardian*, *The Weeding* and *The Last Song* was made to know more about his life, way of thinking and writing which have influenced the themes in all his novels.

Also, our investigation will be a good source of information to students and English teachers who love to analyze romance through literature but mainly, the people interested in the study and analysis of the literary characteristics of Nicholas Sparks. Through this work, we will increase our intellectual and cultural level as a competent professional of the English teaching language.

## 1.5 Objectives

### General Objectives:

- To show and understand the importance of Nicholas's themes in some of his most outstanding novels.

### Specific Objectives:

- To show why Nicolas Sparks is considered one of the best sellers as a twentieth century writer.
- To point out the main characteristics of Nicholas Sparks' major themes.
- To analyze Nicholas Sparks' significant themes in his most outstanding novels.
- To present the main characteristics, influences and principal writers of the twentieth century.

## 1.6 Kind of Study

In the present work, a literary analysis of the significant themes introduced by Nicholas Sparks in his novels *A Walk to Remember*, *The Notebook*, *The Guardian*, *The Last Song* is presented.

A critical, comparative, descriptive and documental kind of study will be used to help the readers understand the order of sequences through the historical, cultural, and social events that could have influenced Nicholas sparks' literature style.



# CHAPTER II

## **CHAPTER II: THE LIFE AND LITERARY CAREER OF NICHOLAS SPARKS**

### **I. The Life of Nicholas Sparks**

The analysis of Nicholas Spark's life and literary career is discussed in this chapter. Attention will be paid to particular details of his infancy, education, and career as well as to meaningful aspects involved in the skillful design of his themes.

Nicholas Sparks is one of the most ingenious and original writers of romantic novels. He is recognized as a famous novelist, screenwriter and producer. His career is highly recognized worldwide, and his personal and professional success is unparalleled.

(Sparks 2004) was born in Omaha, Nebraska, in the United States of America on December 31, 1965. (p.13) He was a kid with brilliant ideas and with a good heart. He was surrounded by the love of his parents, especially his mother's and raised into the Catholic faith. They lived on eight different places around the United States: Water Town, Minnesota, Inglewood, Los Angeles, Grand Island, Nebraska, and, finally, Fair Oaks, California, from quiet farms to dangerous neighborhood where drugs, prostitutes and gangs were commonly seen.

(Sparks 2004) mentions in his autobiography that he had a difficult childhood. His father, Patrick Sparks, had to work and study at the same time and practically they did not see him much. His mother, Jill Emma Marie, was responsible for her family and the farm they had. She taught her three children Micah, Nicholas and Danielle to love each other and to be responsible. Her eldest four-year child, Micah, shared with his mother the responsibility of taking care of his younger siblings. Mr. Sparks grew up admiring and worshiping them. He felt a great admiration for his older brother, Micah, who was the role model for him and

Danielle, his younger sister. She was his angel, that person who deserved all the good things in the world. Unfortunately, she died at the age of 33 of a brain tumor. The author always said that he felt very fortunate to have them in his life. He learned to love in his family and that feeling remained with him for the rest of his life.(p.15)

Mr. Sparks grew up immersed in the love provided by his family, felt even in the most difficult moments. Nevertheless, as time passed, problems arose in his parents' marriage and it was about to collapse. They were separated for a year and a half, but their love was greater than their problems and they could overcome them. They managed to face and solve all their difficulties, recognized their mistakes, and gave themselves a new opportunity to keep their family together. Not even in that period Mr. Sparks and his siblings witnessed any verbal or physical confrontation between their parents, not even offences. Respect, moral values, kindness, tenderness and love were always taught and felt by the children.

Nicholas Sparks' mother was and will always be an enigma for him. She played an essential role in his life. She not only taught them general knowledge about life but also showed them an unconditional love that only a good mother can give to their children. A woman who used to surprise her children with her sincerity and honesty. She was the first person to encourage Nicholas Sparks to write a book. (Sparks 2004) One of the phrases that she commonly said was: What you want and what you get are usually two entirely different things. No one ever said that life was fair. (p. 127)

Mr. Sparks describes his father as his hero, a learned and cultured man who loved literature like his mother. Twice a month he visited libraries to enjoy reading books. Nicholas admired him a lot and used to listen to him for hours. (Sparks 2004) would always remember three rules that his father used to tell him when he was a teenager: don't drink and drive; don't get a girl pregnant and be in your curfew-midnight as a freshman and increasing half an hour with every passing year in high school. (p.159)

Nicholas' father Patrick Sparks worked as an entrepreneur and as a college business professor. He went to the University of Minnesota in Southern California. He died in 1996 in a car accident at the age of 54. Since then, Sparks' mother worked during a short period of time as an ophthalmologist's secretary. She died in 1989 in a horseback riding accident at the age of 47. She donated all her organs to save the life of three people. Both were born in 1942.

Our writer graduated as Valedictorian in Bella Vista High school ; then, he obtained a full athletic scholarship at the University of Notre Dame where he graduated in Finance. But his university career was not easy. He wanted to become a famous runner as Billy Mill whom he admired. He practiced quite often and made a great effort to succeed in this dream, but unfortunately, Mr. Sparks injured a tendon in an accident and could not participate in the competence. Since then, he could not run as expected. So, he returned home to take a break. He was distressed not only because he had suffered an accident that had stopped him from being a famous runner but also because the relationship, he had with his girlfriend also finished.

On the other hand, in the summer of 1988 Nicholas Spark met Cathy Cole. She was studying in New Hampshire. However, the attraction between them was mutual and they discovered they had many things in common. In October 12, 1988, he asked her hand in marriage and on July 22, 1989 they got married in a Catholic church. Cathy was not only his wife but also his best support in difficult times.

Nicholas Sparks had five children with his wife Caty: Miles Andrew, Rayan Cote, Landon, and two beautiful twins Lexie Danielle and Savannah Marin. However, in the year 2015, our author confirmed his divorce after 25 years of marriage.

Mr. Sparks has contributed to society by sponsoring creative programs at the University of Notre Dame, where he graduated and still provides scholarships. In 2011, Nicholas Sparks and his wife decided to create Nicholas Spark's

Foundation, a nonprofit organization committed to improving cultural and international understanding through global education experiences for students of all ages. Also, our author still cooperates to many social and cultural charities. In addition, Mr. Sparks founded The Epiphany School in New Bern, North Carolina in 2006.

Undoubtedly, Nicholas Sparks has lived a very interesting life full of emotions, surprises, deceptions and dreams attained. He is the reflection of inspired parents who above all taught him the value of being grateful for what he could achieve in life.

## II. The Literary Career of Nicholas Sparks

The amazing career of Nicholas Sparks is exciting. His books are capable of letting us feel different kinds of emotions: love, fear, loneliness, happiness. Sometimes the themes are so engaging that we do not want to stop reading them. He can adapt his style to different times or era, making it unique by adding experiences of his own. He is able to present different perspectives on themes such as love, death, and faith that can make us feel love and at the same time sadness breaking our hearts while reading.

As previously stated, Nicholas' parents were avid readers and it influenced him very much. Because of them, Nicholas Sparks became an eclectic reader. He discovered his love for the classics while reading *Don Quixote*, *the Return of the Native*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Ulysses*, *Emma* and authors like Shakespeare and Agatha Christie. He showed preference for horror stories because he grew up watching old horror movies and admiring Stephen King's works and for love stories such as *Sweet Valley* by Francine Pascal, a series of romantic short stories about the life of the twins Elizabeth and Jessica Wakefield.

Nicholas Sparks' mother enjoyed reading works of James Herriot and Dick Francis as Mr. Sparks did too. She is the person who gave him the idea of becoming a writer. One day, as a result of a conversation they had, she asked him to write, he thought about the suggestion and he began writing; in the process, he discovered that he had talent and he enjoyed it. (Sparks 2004) "I was nineteen years old and had become an accidental author. It's funny the way things happen in life". (p.84).

The first book Mr. Sparks wrote was *The Passing* finished in 1985 when he was 19. The second one is *Royal Murder* finished in 1989, when he was 22. Even though both still remain unpublished, our author enjoyed them very much. Mr. Sparks' first publication was *A Lakota Journey to Happiness and Self-*

*Understanding* in 1990, whose co-author is the famous athlete Billy Mills. The book had great acceptance and in its first week they earned more than 50.000.

Nicholas Sparks began to write his most outstanding novel *The Notebook* in 1993 and finished it in 1995. It was published in 1996. A few months later, Teresa Park, a literary agent, called him interested in becoming his representative; later Warner Bros. wanted to buy the rights of this book to make a movie, they offered him one million dollars to adapt it to a movie film and Mr. Sparks agreed. The book was adapted to a film, book clubs and tours among others.

Nicholas Sparks wrote some of his books inspired in his own relatives. For instance, he thought in his wife's parents to create *The Notebook*; in his brother-in-law to write *A Bend in the Road*; in his father to write *Message in The Bottle* and in his son Ryan to write *The\_Rescue*. Mr. Sparks got his inspiration to write *A Walk to Remember* from his sister Danielle Sparks, the book was dedicated to his father, mother, and her dead sister's memory.

Based on his novels, Nicholas Sparks also published a learning series for high school students so that teachers can help them write creatively. Nicholas believes that he has the opportunity to inspire others through his books and to help them enter into the world of letters. Each novel that forms part of the series contains the guidelines, instructions and rubrics to help teachers perform the class.

Nicholas Sparks' books	
The Notebook	1996
<i>Message in a Bottle</i>	1998
<i>A Walk to Remember</i>	1999
The Rescue	2000
<i>A Bend in the Road</i>	2001
Nights in Rodanthe	2002
<i>The Weeding</i>	2003
Three Weeks with my brother	2004
The Guardian	2004
True Believer	2005
At first sight	2005
Dear John,	2006
The Choice	2007
The Lucky one	2008
The Last Song	2009
Safe Heaven	2010
The Best of me	2011
The longest Ride	2013
See Me	2015
Two by Two	2016
Every breath	2018



In relation to his improvement as a writer, according to Cliffs Notes on the blog *An Interview with Nicholas Sparks*, they asked him if his writing process has improved throughout the years and our author answered:

**In what other ways, if any, has your writing process or style changed over the years?**

**On a technical level, I think I've improved my literary style, and some aspects of writing come more natural. My writing schedule has become more structured over the years. With that said, writing well remains difficult. It is easy to write something average or even something good. However, writing well is quite challenging.**

Nicholas Sparks. (2016). *An Interview with Nicholas Sparks*. Cliff Notes, 1, 1.

The novels that have remained favorite among Nicholas Sparks' readers have a common element and it is love. It is a favorite theme among adolescents and general public. But when the same novel combines it with other universal themes such as death, faith or sickness the effect in the readers is awesome. According to an interview in the Cliff Notes website *An interview with Nicholas Sparks*, they asked Mr. Nicholas how he would like to be remembered by his readers and he answered:

**How do you hope to be remembered?**

**I want to be remembered not only for my body of work but also for specific novels. Ideally, I want to be remembered in the same way as Stephen King, who defined and exemplified excellence in the horror genre in the late 20th and early 21st century. I hope to be remembered as an author who defined and exemplified excellence in crafting the modern love story.**

Nicholas Sparks. (2016). *An Interview with Nicholas Sparks*. Cliff Notes, 1, 1.

Mr. Sparks will be an author not only remembered for writing contemporary love novels, his readers will also remember him as a good and humble man who did not change when he met fortune, success or fame and whose thoughts and feelings could be easily seen in his stories.

# **CHAPTER III**

### CHAPTER III: LITERARY CRITICISM

Being Nicholas Sparks a best seller writer about the romantic genre, and all his stories read by many people. It is important to show in this work some good and bad criticism about our author, who in spite of writing in the romantic genre, is the kind of author who receives good comments and very few bad ones. Nonetheless he cannot skip his reality.

A good comment about this author in his book *A Walk To Remember*, was made by Sunday New York post, that says |

**"An extraordinary book...touching, at times riveting...a book you won't soon forget."**

—**Sunday New York Post** (Sparks N. , Teen Reads, 2019)

*A Walk To Remember* was a successful novel written by this author, those people who read this book, would read this book again, because it is impossible to forget it. It is because the themes and characters Mr. Sparks has created are the magic of the success of this book. Sparks combined two themes together such as faith and love, making this book something unique and special where the life of two people can be changed through love and faith.

There is another positive criticism made by Library Journal that says:

**"A more romantic testament to love's enduring miracle than Robert James Waller's *The Bridges of Madison County*."**

—**Library Journal** (Sparks N. , teen reads , 2019)

*The Notebook* is a story that deals with true love and miracles. It is a classical love story.

Nicholas Sparks' book *The Guardian* has such a great and good criticism one of it is about Southern Pines Pilot ( NC) that says;

**“ An exciting mystery... Fans of Sparks won't be disappointed.”**

\_ **Southern Pines Pilot ( NC)** (Sparks N. , The Guardian , 2004)

Through the analysis of this criticism, we know that it is a good and interesting book, something refreshing for romantic readers and combines mystery and love. It involves the reader and does not disappoint anyone at the end of the story.

*The wedding* is a story that receives good and bad comments. One positive comment here was made by Tulsa World Newspaper;

**“A slice of life readers will take to their hearts.”**

\_ **Tulsa world** (Learning)

Here Patricia from the *Tulsa World* newspaper comments that *The Wedding* is a story that each reader will keep in mind during all his or her life. It shows how to conquer love again and renew a relationship, a theme that readers may be identified with. But there is bad criticism about this book made by Yvonne Crittenden, who says that *The Wedding* is a happy and unrealistic love story.

## The Last Song

**“ A very enjoyable read... a plot that allows his characters to learn and grow from their experiences... Sparks is at his best.”**

**\_ Greensboro News- Record ( NC) (Sparks N. , The Last Song, 2009)**

The above is a good criticism about Mr. Sparks, because the essence of this book is to learn and grow by each experience and that no matter if we make mistakes, the most important thing is to recognize them, forgive ourselves and start over.

# **Chapter IV**

## CHAPTER IV: CRITICISM ABOUT OTHER AUTHORS

Nicholas Sparks is a remarkable writer who has used wonderful ideas to write books. His readers feel delighted and yearned to read his novels. He has captivated the romantic readers because of his language and imagination. But he is not the only author who has written about love, faith, sacrifice, or death, among other aspects. In this chapter we will mention some writers whose books or themes have been compared to Mr. Sparks'.

One of these books is *Forever My Girl*, written by Heidi Mc Laughling, later adapted into a film. This book received both, good and bad comments by the readers. One of the comments that called our attention was that one of the themes and some characteristics of this author were compared to Nicholas Sparks'. But plagiarism was not a matter of discussion between these two authors.

There is another best-seller author who uses some themes similar to Nicholas Sparks', the name of this author is Gayle Forman. She is a romantic genre writer who in most of her novels uses themes such as sacrifices, romance, heartbreak, friendship and fate. One of her most famous book is *If I stay*, Something really interesting about this author is that she is the kind of author that thinks love makes people immortal because of its power.

Another famous and recognized contemporary author in the romantic genre is JoJo Moyes. Her books include the theme of love. In her real life, she is not a romantic person. She simply thought about the extraordinary things love can make people feel. One of her famous books is *Me Before you*.

There is a best seller writer whose name is John Green who writes about love. He writes stories where teenagers feel identified. Some of his famous books are *The Fault of our stars*, *Paper Towns*, *Looking for Alaska*. John green writes in



different ways, his novels involve love and tragedy. This is an author share a similar characteristic with Mr. Sparks, he uses his own experience to write his stories. The themes he uses in his novels are love, forgiveness, tragedy, death, sickness. One interesting aspect found in some of John Green's books is disappointment and how people learn to handle with it; sometimes, in her novels, the characters leave their comfort zone to achieve what they want to get in life.

Nonetheless there is a famous North American writer who is widely recognized as a romantic writer and she is Danielle Steel. Danielle writes all her novels based on the theme of love and some of them also include family matters, intrigue, politics and corruption.

# CHAPTER V

## CHAPTER V. THEMES IN NICHOLAS SPARKS' NOVELS

### 5.1 Love Theme in *The Notebook*

Love is a very well-developed theme by Nicholas Sparks. We can see romance in all his novels because love influenced his life. Sometimes, writers write about their own experiences, sometimes they are inspired by what surrounds them, or sometimes they imagine a life that they would have liked to live, and they put in a piece of paper a story that they consider absolutely perfect or what they long to live.

Love is a feeling or emotion that transforms life. It gives sense to life and inspires people to share, to be better and even to sacrifice themselves for others. The Chinese writer Lao Tzu (Tzu, 2019) thought that love is of all passions the strongest, for it attacks simultaneously the head, the heart and the senses.

It is not easy to describe love, but Lao Tzu has given us a good definition. Nicholas Sparks too because in his books he repeats a phrase that can be considered a good description of what love is. He says that without love we are nothing, that love conquers all, and that love is a beautiful feeling that should be appreciated every single day of life.

Romantic love is a beautiful and at the same time a strange feeling. When someone is in love, the person is delighted with his or her loved one and cannot hide or control that emotion. It attacks people's mind at a point that the person is thinking all the time in that special person, and when they are not together or do not spend time together, they miss each other. However, sometimes love is present in different ways or scenarios, for example, love can come in unexpected ways, sometimes love is in front of us and we do not perceive it.

Sometimes, love makes us feel secure even in the most challenging times when we think that we do not deserve a suffering or when life does not make sense. In Nicholas Sparks' s first and most famous novel *The Notebook*, the author introduces a love theme in a relationship between the main characters Noah Calhoun and Allison Nelson, a young couple who began a romantic relationship during the summer in 1946, in New Bern, North Carolina. This novel shows a passionate and intense love in a young couple that was inseparable and who for some circumstance of destiny, was separated and some years, later reunited.

According to Nicholas Sparks, in his blog, he lets the readers know where he got his inspiration to create this bestselling novel. *The Notebook was inspired by my wife's grandparents, two wonderful people who spent over 60 years together. (Sparks N. , Nicholas Sparks, 1996)*

In this novel, the American writer Nicholas Sparks introduces some elements that are going to represent obstacles for the relationship, just to demonstrate that true love cannot be destroyed by external circumstances, that it can resist against time, social status, fears, family rejection or envy. The English writer William Shakespeare, who also inspired our author Nicholas Sparks, wrote a significant sonnet about love, his sonnet 116 that says:

**“Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments. Love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove:  
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
It is the star to every wandering bark,  
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken  
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come:  
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.**

**If this be error and upon me proved,  
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.”** (Shakespeare, 2019)

In this sonnet William Shakespeare says that no matter how many problems may arise in a relationship, true love is never altered; as a beacon, it is a strong guiding light that cannot be shaken no matter how terrible a problem can be. According to this author, love should not be altered by time, no matter if time takes away beauty with old age. It should not change or diminish with the passing of time nor find any impediment to be consumed.

*The Notebook* is a story that makes readers reflect not only on true love respect, confidence or communication, but also sacrifice and change. He wants to demonstrate that not everything is perfect and not everything that seems to be perfect ends up perfectly.

Sparks (1996) introduces a conversation between Allie and Noah when they meet again after a long time. They had a relationship during the summer of 1946, but Allie’s parents did not accept the relationship, because they did not want her daughter to get married to a poor man, so they took Allie away from Noah and sent her far away from him.

Noah tried to keep the relationship despite the circumstances and wrote many letters to Allie, but her mother hid them from her.

**"You never answered my letters."**

**"You wrote,!"**

**"Dozens of letters. I wrote you for two years without receiving a single reply."**

**"I did not know...; "She finally said, quietly, and he knew it must have been her mother, checking the mail, removing the letters without her**

knowledge. It was what he had always suspected, and he watched as Allie came to the same realization. (p. 59).

One of the letters Noah had sent to Allie read as follows:

*“I don't know what to say anymore except that I couldn't sleep last night because I knew that it is over between us. It is a different feeling for me now, one that I never expected, but looking back, I supposed it couldn't have ended another way. You and I were different. We came from different worlds, and yet you were the one who taught me the value of love. You showed me what it was like to care for another, and I am a better man because of it. I don't want you to ever forget that. I am no bitter because of what has happened. On the contrary, I am secure in knowing that what we had was real, and I am happy we were able to come together for even a short period of time. And if, in some distant place in the future, we see each other in our new lives, I will smile at you with joy, and remember how we spent a summer beneath the tress, learning from each other and growing in love. And maybe, for a brief moment, you'll feel it too, and you'll smile back, and savor the memories we will always share together.”* (Sparks N. , *The Notebook*, 1996).

Here we can observe one of the aspects that Shakespeare pronounced in his Sonnet 116, *Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments*. In other words, external circumstances or people should not impede a couple to live a true love if they have so decided. Not even a mother, no one.

The outstanding English writer William Shakespeare (1594) in his famous play *Romeo and Juliet* introduces a theme that can be easily compared with what Mr. Sparks introduces in *The Notebook* and this is the fact that sometimes parents want to participate in their children's decisions because they consider that what they think is the best alternative for them, that their experience can prevent them

of mistakes that could cost a high price. It happens not only when choosing a partner, but also when choosing a university career.

In *The Notebook*, Allie's parents did not accept the existing relationship between Allie and Noah just because he did not belong to their same social status. Noah was a poor man, but with admirable characteristics that made him a decent and learned person, and that they ignored. In the case of *Romeo and Juliet*, her family and Romeo's family enjoyed a similar social status, but they hated each other, and this hate affected the prevailing relationship between this young couple. In both stories, parents' decisions affected their children's existing happiness.

Sometimes, our fate surprises us or simply what God has stipulated for our lives astonishes us. Life is unpredictable and our author in *The Notebook* makes it clear when in the story after several years Noah comes back to his town, buys a house and finds Allie again. The attraction, friendship, and passion once felt between them is undoubtedly still in their hearts. These feelings made Allie decide to stay with Noah forever and this time her mother was not an influence in her decision.

Similarly, in *Romeo and Juliet* we could see that this young couple decided to stay together and to get married despite the disapproving circumstances that surrounded them. They decided to escape but their fate, unfortunately, denied them the opportunity of living their love.

One of love's connotative meaning is sacrifice. Sparks (1996) makes it very clear when one day Noah talks to Allie to make her reconsider if she was really in love with him or with his fiancé: *If you're happy Allie and you love him, I won't try to stop you from going back to him. But if there's a part of you that isn't sure, then don't do it. This isn't the kind of things you go into the halfway.* (p.47). At that moment Noah showed how much he loved Allie to ask her to think twice her decision to stay with him or with her fiancé, and to let him know if she was sure of her love toward him.

In the previous quotation sacrifice is what Mr. Sparks wants to show in his love story. Noah is willing to sacrifice himself for Allie's happiness. He is giving her the option of choosing between him or her fiancé, Lon. He knows the risk, but his love toward Allie is demonstrated once more.

Noah, since the first moment he saw Allie, knew that she would steal his heart." Some people have been looking for love for so long, but others find love at first sight. It happened to Noah and Allie. Noah fell in love with Allie at first sight and she became his soulmate.

Poets have described love in different ways especially through beautiful words. Besides, Sparks describes and compares love mentioning the ability poets have to describe it ( Sparks 1996) "Poets often describe love as an emotion that we can't control, one that overwhelms logic and common sense." That's what it was like for me (p.102)

Sparks (1996), throughout the main character Noah, describes his love during that summer:

**We fell in love, despite our differences, and once we did, something rare and beautiful was created. For me, love like that has happened only once, and that's why every minute we spent together has been seated in my memory. I'll never forget a single moment of it."**(p.102)

On the other hand, he explained the process and differences in how he fell in love with Allie. First Noah's said, ***I didn't plan on falling in love with you , and I doubt if you planned on falling in love with me. But once we met, it was clear that neither of us could control what was happening to us.*** It was something so real, because they never expected to fall in love first because Allie was a city and rich girl. However, Noah was poor. The society judged them and made comments about their relationship that there was no possibility for them to go beyond. So, it was something that Sparks wanted to make clear, that when someone falls in love and this love is true and real, it can overcome any obstacle.



Love is a feeling that shows up when no one expects it. Through the analysis of love in this novel we get to know that our writer, Sparks (1996) wants to express that when two souls are connected no one can separate them.

**“The reason it hurts so much to separate is because our souls are connected. Maybe they always have been and will be. Maybe we have lived a thousand lives before this one, and in each of them, we've found each other. And maybe each time, we've been forced apart for the same reasons. That means that this goodbye is both a goodbye for the past ten thousand years and a prelude to what will come. When I look at you, I see your beauty and grace and know they have grown stronger with every life you have lived. And I know I have spent every life before this one searching for you. Not someone like you but you, for your soul and mine, must always come together. And then, for a reason neither of us understands, we've been forced to say goodbye. I would love to tell you that everything will work out for us, and I promise to do all I can to make sure it does. But if we never meet again and this is truly goodbye, I know we will see each other again in another life. We will find each other again, and maybe the stars will have changed, and we will not only love each other in that time, but for all the times we've had before.” (p.121-122).**

The above is one of the letters that Noah wrote to Allie a few days before, when they knew they were going to be separated. They have a feeling of being separate. ***"I know we will see each other again in another life. We will find each other again, and maybe the stars will have changed, and we will not only love each other in that time, but for all the times we've had before"***.

## 5.2 Love Theme in *The Wedding*

After the immense success of *The Notebook*, in our author's mind there was the rolling idea that he had to continue the story. The fame of his book was such a great huge that the readers wanted to know more about Allie and Noah's life. For this reason, in order to continue the sequel of his famous novel, for some years our author worked hard in *The Wedding*, a new literary production, this time a new novel where he introduced among its characters, Jane Lewis, one of Allie and Noah's daughters.

Some people agree that boredom and routine can ruin a marriage. Married life can sometimes be difficult, but the couple must be aware of the dangers of a tedious life and try to overcome the difficulties that may arise because of it.

In his second novel *The Weeding*, Nicholas Sparks introduces Wilson and Jane, a couple who has been together for 30 years, with three sons, but now on the verge of a separation. He explains his reasons to write "The Weeding."

**"I began thinking about the theme of love and renewal. In other words, I wanted to create a love story between a married couple, one in which the husband decides to court his wife all over again. I thought this would be a story that not only original to readers, but one that they might find relevant as well. Marriage is both the most wonderful and frustrating experiences of most people's lives. No one's marriage is perfect, and no one's marriage is always easy. For these reasons, I find great nobility in people who work to improve their marriage and do their best to keep the romance in their marriage."** (Sparks N. , Nicholas Sparks, 2003)

At the beginning of the story the author introduces the two main characters with different personalities. Jane, a sociable woman with an extrovert character who was raised in a very communicative and happy family and Wilson, who was

the opposite, a man who could hardly communicate his feelings and emotions and whose family did not show their affections either, even though they loved each other.

This couple was currently facing difficult moments because of tediousness and the effects of monotony. As the decision of separation was almost imminent, Nicholas Sparks introduces a character in the story who is going to make things turn different for the couple. Noah, one of *The Notebook*'s main character, has been observing his daughter's difficult marriage and wanted to do something to help them rediscover how much they still love each other.

Here is when Nicholas Sparks' s main character in *The Notebook*, appears to help his daughter and his brother in law to win back the love that was once felt between them. In a flashback here, in *The Notebook* we knew how much love existed between Noah and Allie, so if someone knows about love this person is Noah. In this novel Nicholas Sparks also gives us more details to what happened in Noah's life after Allie passed away.

In *The Wedding*, our author refers to the fact that no external influences must harm a marriage. Work is important in life, but sometimes we spend a lot of time working hard to get our aims. We simply do not realize how dangerous it is to dedicate too much time to work rather than to the family. We should equilibrate the activities to avoid negative consequences on either side.

In *The Wedding*, it is clearly mentioned that being a workaholic is not a good thing. This is exactly what Wilson Lewis, a busy lawyer, did. He worked too much and quite often forgot about his wife and children and it was creating a distance from Jane. One day he forgot his wedding anniversary and Jane had spent time preparing a surprised dinner to celebrate together. Since then , things got different between them. He felt her distance and the silence was clearly heard.

One of the most interesting aspects in *The Wedding* is the way that our character, Wilson Lewis, recognizes his mistakes on his marriage:

**Sparks (2003) "In the course of my marriage, I've been selfish and stubborn and as ignorant as a goldfish, and it pains me to realize this about myself. Yet, looking back, I believe that if I've done one thing right, it has been to love my wife throughout our years together. Of course, all marriages go through ups and downs, and I believe this is natural consequence of couples that choose to stay together over the long haul. (p.3).**

In this story we get to know that Wilson was a responsible and serious husband who provided security and economic stability to his family, but who could not perceive the problem arising in his marriage because of his lack of personal attention to them. When someone accepts to get married to another person it is a big challenge; they must live for each other. No one says it is easy because people can make mistakes, as Wilson did. The most important thing is to recognize it and to find the ways to mend it.

Our main character, Wilson, understood that he had been doing wrong for not giving Jane her importance in their relationship, for not dedicating enough time to his family nor sharing or enjoying together the beautiful things of life. So, after perceiving in Jane an unusual distance and each day that passed a visible indifference toward him, he understood that he was losing her; he realized how much he still loved her and that he was about to lose everything he had: his family. He understood that he had to do something to bring his wife back to him. So, he decided to talk to Jane's father, his father-in-law, Noah, for advice who told him that in any marriage problems arise and that there will be ups and downs and that he had to think on something to win Jane back to him (Sparks 2003) After listening to those words, many ideas came to Wilson's mind. He was resolute to show his love for Jane. He acted differently becoming a more attentive man to his wife; he began cooking for her, accompanying her while walking, being more communicative, and worrying about his daughter's wedding matters.(p.25).

The wedding was not exactly for Wilson's daughter. (Sparks 2003) The family began planning Wilson and Jane's wedding for a year, without telling Jane. She had always dreamed on a religious wedding celebration, with guests and family members. While preparing the wedding Jane thought it was for her daughter but at the wedding day, she knew the wedding was a gift given to her by her husband Wilson and her three children (p. 266).

As previously mentioned, in this love theme, Nicholas Sparks wants his character Wilson to try to recover his almost lost relationship as a message to couples in the world.

The Lebanese author Kahlil Gibran in his book *The Prophet* he wrote a poem called On Marriage where he analyzes this condition and reveals the secret to keep a marriage.

You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore.  
You shall be together when white wings of death scatter your days.  
Aye, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.  
But let there be spaces in your togetherness,  
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.  
Love one another but make not a bond of love:  
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.  
Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.  
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.  
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be  
alone,  
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the  
same music.  
Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.  
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.  
And stand together, yet not too near together:

For the pillars of the temple stand apart,  
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.  
(Gibran, Poetry Foundation, 2019)

Kahlil Gibran in his poem stresses the importance to stay together in their relationship but at the same recommends them to let there be spaces between them so that each one could live freely while being together. Time must be perfectly well or intentionally well distributed, so that the person can have enough time to work but at the same time give enough attention to the family.4.3 Love Theme in The Last Song

The Last Song is a book that includes the theme of forgiveness and the importance of giving second chances in life. Two important themes will be analyzed in this work: a love theme and a father-daughter relationship.

By making it an emotional novel, *The Last Song* deals with essential aspects of human life such as love and forgiveness, trust, betrayal, friendship, fears, faith, and spirituality, themes that have characterized Mr. Sparks' literary works.

In relation to Nicholas Sparks' motives to write this book he once said:

**“Three words (originality, interesting and universal) popped into my head, and I knew I had to make the novel as different from *A Walk to Remember* as possible, while still retaining all those wonderful emotional elements.**

**I wanted the characters to feel the need (or almost feel forced) to spend time together, even though they didn't much like each other at first. And whatever this element was, it had to (a) be at the coast of North Carolina, (b) be something that could happen to anyone, and (c) begin in June and end in August. (Sparks, 2002-2019)**

(Sparks 2009 ) also wanted to create a story that adults could relate to so he added an element of faith in this novel that could be very well valued by them. (411)

In order to introduce the father-daughter relationship (Veronica and Steve), the author presents a broken relationship between a father and his family. In the story the father must recover the love and time lost because of his work responsibilities. As a pianist, due to his contracts and concerts he spent a lot of time away from home. It was his profession, but it had negative consequences for his family. This distance provoked his divorce.

Veronica's parents got divorced when she was a teenager; that decision affected so much Veronica because she was very attached to her father. They shared something in common as it was their love for music, playing the piano was a mutual satisfaction. Veronica was excellent at the piano because of her father. Since she was a little girl, her father discovered her talent and had her develop it. However, after her he left because of the divorce, it affected all his children, especially Ronnie who felt resentment and hate toward her father.

It used to be a strong connection, but it was broken when Veronica was given a Julliard scholarship to study piano but she rejected it because she did not want to have any contact with what could remember her father. **She'd been consumed by the desire not only to play but to compose original music with her father. (p9)**

Veronica felt so angry at such a level to quit one of his dreams, as it was music. It is because music was for her as a reminder of the relationship she had with her father that made her rebirth old wounds.

**"Why did you leave us, dad?" she asked. "I am old enough for the truth, okay?"**

**"There was someone else, wasn't there," she said. Her voice held no inflection.**

**When he finally answered, he sounded tired. "I know I should have tried harder to save the marriage, and I'm sorry about that. More sorry than you'll ever know. But I want you to know something, okay? I never stopped believing in your mom, I never once stopped believing in the endurance of our love. Even though it didn't work out in the end the way you or I wanted it to, I see you and Jonah and I think how lucky I am to have you as children. In a lifetime of mistakes, you two are the greatest things that have ever happened to me."**  
(p183-184.)

Here is when one of the essential secrets starts to come out, when his daughter asked her father, why he left and leave them alone. Steve has been a character very shut up, and the only thing he wanted to avoid in his life was to hurt the most important in his life his sons. Here we see the most profound love a father felt for his sons, instead of telling the truth, he preferred to keep that secret. However the truth was that he decided to get away from his family because during his musician carrier he was trying to follow his dream and he was more concentrated in his music and travel for all the country to get his dream, than his family ,consequently he gets the point to carelessness his own family at point that his eldest daughter blamed him when he decided to get divorce of his wife but just the time will let his son know the reasons that carry him to do it. Also, these reasons were in the majority of his fault, the time that he was out of home traveling, and the infidelity of his wife, this last thing his son and daughter did not know anything about it just at the end.



### 5.3 Love Theme in A Walk to Remember

Nicholas Sparks is better known as the king of the emotions, his nickname is due to his ability to create a love story that makes people smile and cry at the same. *A Walk to remember* is one of these novels that does not disappoint the romantic reader.

Romantic love can appear at any stage in life. Adolescents, young people, elders, fall in love and get married because they want to live their romance and be happy for the rest of their lives, but sometimes destiny can surprise us. A disease may appear, and it can bring not only pain and sorrow to the relationship, but also a change.

In *A Walk to Remember* Mr. Sparks introduces a love story where a couple of adolescents meets and falls in love. It is something usual in life, a common process. The problem in the story was that Jamie suffered of a terminal disease, leukemia, and had few months to live.

One of the most interesting aspects about this novel is the author's inspiration to write it. He considered it a tribute to his sister who, for some years, fought against a brain tumor and died out of it. This novel represents a significant memory to his sister Danielle Sparks who was his inspiration to write this novel. In addition, he gave his main character Jamie Elizabeth Sullivan some of his sister's characteristics and real-life experiences.

In his autobiography named *Three Weeks with my Brother*, Nicholas Sparks let us know about a conversation he once had with his sister. She told him once that she wanted to get married as her mother did and that she wanted to have kids too.

In the novel *A Walk To Remember* ( Sparks 1999) we can find the same dream that Jamie Elizabeth Sullivan wanted in her life when she mentioned it to Landon, her friend: "I want to get married," she said quietly." and when I do, I want my father to walk me down the aisle and I want everyone I know to be there. I want the church bursting with people." (p.99)

Nonetheless, we can see directly something in common about Danielle and Jamie; both of them wanted to get married. On the other hand, to confirm that the author inspirations to create this novel was true, Nicholas in his blog, mentioned and explained that inspiration to write this story let the readers know about the amazing ability this author had to use his own experience and create wonderful characters as Jamie Sullivan in this book. Nicholas said the following:

**A Walk to Remember was my favorite novel to write. I enjoyed the process of capturing the voice of a smart-alecky 17-year-old kid. Likewise with Jamie Sullivan. There was something intrinsically sweet about her character that gradually seemed to take over the book. It was also the only novel that made me cry while writing. A Walk to Remember was inspired by my sister. In many ways, Jamie Sullivan was my younger sister. Like Jamie, my sister was sweet. Like Jamie, my sister had tremendously strong faith. Like Jamie, my sister loved church. Like Jamie, my sister wasn't popular at school. Like Jamie, my sister was always cheerful. Like Jamie, all my sister wanted in life was to get married. And like Jamie, my sister got cancer. Like Jamie, my sister met someone. And like Landon, there was a long period of time when this fellow couldn't imagine himself marrying a girl like her. And yet, in the end, he couldn't help himself. Even when he knew she was sick, even when he knew that she might not make it, this man asked my sister to marry him. It was just about the sweetest thing that's ever been done for anyone, and I suppose I wrote this novel not only so that you could get to know my sister, but so that you would know what a wonderful thing it was that her husband once did for her** (Sparks N. , Nicholas Sparks, 1999)

On the other hand, In *A Walk to Remember* this emblematic author wants to express through the love between this couple, that there are no limits to love including death and sometimes love is a leap of faith where sometimes people have to take risk, go beyond the borders and discover who they really are or they can be through a strong feeling as it can be loved.

This is not an ordinary story because it is very different from other books, where tragedy comes in the biggest form. Nonetheless, our author has a peculiar way to think about love; Nicholas thought that in each love story needs to exist almost a tragedy, because the bigger the tragedy, the bigger this feeling is. However, This story presents something so beautiful that any does not have is a loving story of how a person can change someone's life but more emotional it is to see how a person, knowing that someone would die at any moment, still decided to get married to her, presenting us the transformation of a person who was lost, and when someone believes in you and makes you feel that you can be a better version of you. Finally, here is when our character Sparks wants to stand out through the character Landon something vital when someone gets married as it is the importance of the Vow of marriage.

Everything starts in this story with a little advertisement when Jamie Sullivan, our main character, tells Landon not to fall in love with her. (Sparks 1999) "You have to promise that you will not fall in love with me." (p.44) However, here is when our author Introduced one of the most significant moments in this novel because here Landon in his plan and mind never thought to fall in love with a girl like, Jamie, who does not have things in common with him, Also, Landon used to think how funny Jamie was, without knowing that she would be the love of his life.

Through this book Mr., Sparks was immersing us in a story where both guys discovered first love, in person, situation around them, but mainly with an innocence of this feeling just know how to do this kind of things. However, Sparks writes in this book a scene at the exact moment when this couple were falling in

love and it was a scene when Jamie wanted to know what Landon thought about love, what it meant for him.

(Sparks 1999) expressed throughout one of the main characters about what means to him, Landon says,

**"Have you ever been in love"?**

**"How did you know it was love?"**

**"well," I said seriously, "you know it's love when all you want to do is spend time with the other person, and you sort of know that the other person feels the same way."( p. 74)**

Since that moment Nothing was the same, Here is when Jamie discovered that she was falling in love with Landon; for that reason, she asked him what he thought about love, Every moments that Jamie spent with Landon was so special for her, that also made her ask herself if that feeling was so strong, that maybe can be reflected in the way she loved Landon.

However, in the middle of the plot, Sparks is presenting how these feelings appeared. It was only a moment when Landon, one of the main characters, discovered a tremendous feeling toward Jamie. It was during a silent night when, they were in the orphanage. Landon accepted to help Jamie with some activities and little by little he was involved in the same things that Jamie did to help people specially kids. However, it was during a silent night where something this author magically (Sparks 1999) presents in this story. Jamie gave him her bible, something so important and significant for her, she gave that present as a symbol of how grateful she was with him, it also represented how humble and straightforward was her way of acting and it made Jamie exceptional. Nonetheless, this was the first moment that Landon realized and discovered that he was in love with Jamie, and he was so amazed about discovering a girl who put his world upside-down.

**“At these images were going through my head, my breathing suddenly went still. I looked at Jamie, then up the ceiling and around the room, doing my best to keep my composure, then back to Jamie again, she smiled at me, and I smiled at her, and all I could do was wonder how I'd ever fallen in love with a girl like Jamie Sullivan.” (p.154)**

Through time, Jamie and Landon realized that they were in love, but unfortunately destiny had other plans for them. One day Jamie tells Landon that she was sick, that she had Leukemia, an illness that she was fighting with for many years, but she was in an advance stage. At the beginning it was something that affected them, but mainly to Landon, because Jamie was a person who had changed his life. She taught Landon everything about the most beautiful things in life, she helped Landon to become a new person, to feel love, compassion and to help others without expecting nothing in return. There is phrase where (Sparks1999) mentions through the main character of this story, what a person can do, when she or he loves someone with all his soul.

**“I was in love with her, so deeply in love that I didn't care if she was sick. I didn't care that we wouldn't have long together. None of those things mattered to me. All I care about was doing something that my heart had told me was the right thing to do. In my mind it was the first time God had ever spoken directly to me, and I knew with certainty that I wasn't going to disobey.” (p.234)**

We can see here what Landon thought about his love for Jamie. We can describe this love as something extraordinary; this love does not mind about how sick Jamie was, but what he felt for her.

But the most special aspect that we can see in this book, is when (Sparks 1999) through the character of Landon, did something so special for Jamie. Showing here how much, he loves her. However not only how much love, he felt for Jamie, but also we could appreciate the transformation in Landon, the main character, and a cumulus of emotions he had about asking to his lovely and special girl to get married to him. He always prayed to God, to illuminate him, to do

something so significant as Jamie did to him in his life, and God gave him the answer.

One of Jamie's dream was to get married as his father and mother did, she wanted to walk into the church hall next to her father and at the end they did it.

**Do you love me?' I asked her. She smiled. 'Yes.' 'Do you want me to be happy?' as I asked her this, I felt my heart beginning to race. 'Of course, I do.' 'Will you do something for me then?' She looked away, sadness crossing her features. 'I don't know if I can anymore.' she said. 'but if you could, would you?' I cannot adequately describe the intensity of what I was feeling at that moment. Love, anger, sadness, hope, and fear, whirling together sharpened by the nervousness I was feeling. Jamie looked at me, curiously, and my breaths became shallower. Suddenly I knew that I'd never felt as strongly for another person as I did at that moment. As I returned her gaze, this simple realization made me wish for the millionth time that I could make all this go away. Had it been possible, I would have traded my life for hers. I wanted to tell her my thoughts, but the sound of her voice suddenly silenced the emotions inside me. 'yes,' she finally said, her voice weak yet somehow still full of promise. 'I would.' Finally getting control of myself, I kissed her again, then brought my hand to her face, gently running my fingers over her cheek. I marveled at the softness of her skin, the gentleness I saw in her eyes. Even now, she was perfect. My throat began to tighten again, but as I said, I knew what I had to do.**

**Since I had to accept that it was not within my power to cure her, what I wanted to do was give her something that she'd wanted. It was what my heart had been telling me to do all along. Jamie, I understood then, had already given me the answer I'd been searching for, the answer my heart needed to find. She'd told me outside Mr. Jenkin's office, the night we'd asked him about doing the play. I smiled softly, and she returned my affection with a slight squeeze of my hand, as if trusting me in what I was about to do. Encouraged, I leaned closer and took a deep breath. When I exhaled,**

**these were the words that flowed with my breath. "Will you marry me?" (p.230-232.)**

This is such an essential scene because Landon in his entire life had never thought to find a person like Jamie. Jamie was more than his complement or his soulmate, Jamie was an extraordinary person. She showed him why life is so significant and why it is deserved to live and enjoy every minute of it. Jamie taught Landon why little and simple things and actions in life are the ones that give people joy and gratification. Jamie taught Landon that having faith can win any difficult battle even in the most challenging times, also that resentment and complaints only hurt people's heart, that forgiveness really heals those evils. But above everything Jamie taught Landon what love is, and what a fantastic emotion can be felt when someone loves with all his/her heart, without restrictions.

### 4.3 Love Theme in The Last Song

The Last Song is a book that includes the theme of forgiveness and the importance of giving second chances in life. Two important themes will be analyzed in this work: a love theme and a father-daughter relationship.

By making it an emotional novel, *The Last Song* deals with essential aspects of human life such as love and forgiveness, trust, betrayal, friendship, fears, faith, and spirituality, themes that have characterized Mr. Sparks' literary works.

In relation to Nicholas Sparks' motives to write this book he once said:

**"Three words (originality, interesting and universal) popped into my head, and I knew I had to make the novel as different from *A Walk to Remember* as possible, while still retaining all those wonderful emotional elements.**

**I wanted the characters to feel the need (or almost feel forced) to spend time together, even though they didn't much like each other at first. And whatever this element was, it had to (a) be at the coast of North Carolina, (b) be something that could happen to anyone, and (c) begin in June and end in August. (Sparks, 2002-2019)**

**(Sparks 2009 ) also wanted to create a story that adults could relate to so he added an element of faith in this novel that could be very well valued by them. (411)**

In order to introduce the father-daughter relationship (Veronica and Steve), the author presents a broken relationship between a father and his family. In the story the father must recover the love and time lost because of his work responsibilities. As a pianist, due to his contracts and concerts he spent a lot of time away from home. It was his profession, but it had negative consequences for his family. This distance provoked his divorce.



Veronica's parents got divorced when she was a teenager; that decision affected so much Veronica because she was very attached to her father. They shared something in common as it was their love for music, playing the piano was a mutual satisfaction. Veronica was excellent at the piano because of her father. Since she was a little girl, her father discovered her talent and motivated her to develop it. However, after her he left because of the divorce, it affected all his children, especially Ronnie who felt resentment and hate toward her father.

It used to be a strong connection, but it was broken when Veronica was given a Julliard scholarship to study piano, but she rejected it because she did not want to have any contact with what could remember her father. She'd been consumed by the desire not only to play but to compose original music with her father. (p9)

Veronica felt so angry that she wanted to quit one of her dreams: music. It was a reminder of the relationship she had with her father and it also made her recollect old memories and wounds.

**Why did you leave us, dad?" she asked. "I am old enough for the truth, okay?"**

**"There was someone else, wasn't there," she said. Her voice held no inflection.**

**When he finally answered, he sounded tired. "I know I should have tried harder to save the marriage, and I'm sorry about that. More sorry than you'll ever know. But I want you to know something, okay? I never stopped believing in your mom, I never once stopped believing in the endurance of our love. Even though it didn't work out in the end the way you or I wanted it to, I see you and Jonah and I think how lucky I am to have you as children. In a lifetime of mistakes, you two are the greatest things that have ever happened to me."**  
(p183-184.)

Here is when one of the essential secrets starts to come out, when Veronica asks her father, why he had gone leaving her alone. Steve has been very discreet and reserved and he did not want to hurt his children, the most important persons in his life. But he needed to leave them because of his musical career. He needed to make his music known and to follow his dreams. In so doing he had to travel all over the country. As a result, he was negligent, not economical but physically with his own family. His wife asked him to divorce and his children did not know anything about it, but at the end.

There is an interesting phrase related to the above-mentioned paragraph, said by Nicholas Sparks (2009) in the movie *The Last Song*

**"Sometimes you have to be apart from people you love, but that doesn't make you love them any less. Sometimes you love them more."**

**(Nicholas Sparks,2009 The Last Song Movie)**

We can make mistakes in life because we are humans and it is something totally normal, but it doesn't mean that if we cannot be physically with the ones we love, we simply do not love them. It was the case of Steve, he left their kids and wife, but he never stopped loving them.

Also Sparks teaches us in this novel the sacrifices that a father can do for his family, not only sacrificing a personal contact with them, but also lying about his sickness for not making them sad.

**(Sparks 2009) When their eyes met, it was one of the few times in her life that she actually felt tongue-tied. (p112)**

Despairs those thoughts sometimes inside, William made him believe that the relationship would change him and will mean something for him.

Another kind of love Sparks shows in this novel is the earnest love, between his daughter Veronica and her boyfriend William. A love at first sight, that unexpectedly happened. A couple that shared many things in common. Life made him mature because both knew about family losses and how much love and loyalty mean in a relationship.

He was struck by the thought that this was the girl with whom he'd like to face the future. (p.211)

No matter how young William is, he appreciates and respects the relationship he has with Veronica. In our society it is not common to find a love like this so unique and perfect. But it does not mean that it is impossible to find. What is important in a relationship is to understand the true meaning of love and faithfulness, never stop considering each other as friends.

#### 5.4 Love Theme in The Guardian

Nicholas Sparks is a writer who goes beyond his own limits and is able to work and explore different ways of writing. He wrote *The Guardian*, an entirely different novel in comparison to the ones he had written before. It has a love theme mixed with suspense and mystery and elements of detective fiction too. In Nicholas Sparks' blog we can read what inspired him to write this novel

**(Sparks 2004) I wanted to create in my own novel, not only because of my own preferences, but as a way to keep this particular novel fresh and original for my readers. Yet, creating fright and tension wasn't as much of a change in the style of my novels as most people might assume, even though I'm most known for writing love stories. I wanted to write a story in which two believable characters fell in love, but I wanted to add elements of suspense that would ultimately put both characters in jeopardy. (Sparks N. , Nicholas Sparks, 2004)**

*The Guardian* was a novel that brought Mr. Sparks many surprises because his literary agent advised him to rewrite it. Obviously, this activity interrupted Nicholas Sparks' time to create other stories, his schedules, among other things. So, he began to rewrite it becoming later a big success.

One of the main messages in this book is the aspect of giving us second chances to love again and if we do, we must know the person well and be careful at the moment of choosing. We find in this story the different sides of love: an obsessive love that teaches us to be careful, love among friends, love in a romantic relationship, eternal love towards those who die and are not anymore with us, and love towards animals.

In this story love is reflected in a young widow named Julie, whose husband died of cancer. She is depicted as a woman without any interest of starting a new relationship, but life surprised her and gave her a second

chance. It is worth mentioning that after her husband Jim, died, he gave instructions to give Julie a present: a Great Dane dog as a Christmas gift. Her husband also promised her that no matter what would happen to him, he would always take care of her.

At first sight in the story, (Sparks 2004) presents to us a letter written in this book through Jim, her late husband, that expresses all the love he felt for Julie. This letter was given on Christmas. In the letter we get to know how much he loved Julie and that even though he was not going to be physically with her, he would always find a way to demonstrate it. ***"And don't worry. From wherever I am, I'll watch out for you. I'll be your guardian angel sweetheart. You can count on me to keep you safe."***

Here, Jim expressed that even being dead, he would find a way to be close to her wife. Sparks also introduces a symbol of protection, the dog, Singer, that will be Julie's guardian angel, as Jim wrote in the letter, ***"I'll be your guardian angel Singer."*** In that letter he let Julie know how much he loved her and that he did not want to see her unhappy. In the middle of the letter, he insisted Julie to be happy and to find a person who could make her happy. ***Be happy again. Find someone who makes you happy.***

Jim shows how well he knows her and how strong he thinks Julie is. ***If I were in your position, it would be hard for me, but you know I've always believed you were the strongest of the two of us... It broke my heart to think that you would be all alone. Not knowing what else to do, I made arrangements to get you this dog.***

Knowing that Julie would be alone without him, he gave her a dog as his last gift to accompany her, so she would not feel lonely, it means that Jim thought about everything, Great Danes dogs are characterized for being great keepers, affectionate, smart, curious, but distrustful with strangers, great guardians.

In the letter, Jim also said, "***The world is a better place when you smile.***" making the reader to interpret that he loves Julie so much, that he wanted her to be happy without him, to find a person who loves her with almost the same love that he felt for Julie. ( Sparks 2004)

***Dear Jules,***

***I know that if you're reading this letter, I've already passed away. I don't know how long I' been gone, but I hope you've been able to begin healing. I know that if I were in your position, it would be hard for me, but you know I've always believed you were the stronger of two of us. I bought you a dog, as you can see. Harold Kuphaldt was a friend of my father's, and he's been raising Great Danes since I was a kid. I always wanted one when I was little, but since the house was so small, Mom always said no. They are big dogs, granted, but according to Harold, They're also just about the sweetest dog in the world. I hope you enjoy him ( or her).I guess I always knew in the back of my mind that I wasn't going to make it. I didn't want to think about it, though, because I knew that you didn't have anyone to help you get through something like this. Family, I mean. It broke my heart to think that you would be all alone. Not knowing what else to do, I made arrangements to get you this dog. If you don't like it, you don't have to keep it, of course. Harold said he'd take it back, no problem. ( His number should be included.) I hope you're doing all right, since I got sick. I've worried nonstop about that. I love you, Jules, I really do. I was the luckiest guy in the world when you came into my life. It would break my heart if I thought you'd never be happy again. So please do that for me. Be happy again. Find someone who makes you happy. It might be hard, you might not think it's possible, but I'd like you to try. The world is a better place when you smile. And don't worry. From whenever I am, I'll watch out for you. I'll be your guardian angel sweetheart. You can count on me to keep you safe.***

***I love you***

***Jim (p.16-17)***

However (Sparks 2004) describes Julie before meeting Jim. Julie was a little bit distrustful. She had a tough life due to her poverty. It was difficult for her to understand why Jim were doing so many things for her. She simply could not believe it.

“It took me a long time to realize why he did, why he did for me. I mean, I'd never known anyone like him. And I had a hard time believing that there were people out there who were just Good.  
“(p.144)

In spite of the fact that Jim did not know anything about her, he simply helped her without any interest in return. There is a touching phrase, that (Sparks 2004) wrote about this that says

“My mom used to tell me that whatever you do, marry someone who loves you more than you love him.” (p.202)

In a marriage we can face many difficulties, but only true love can help us overcome them.

Another kind of love that is presented in this novel is about second chances. Here ( Sparks 2004) showed an example about how Mike, Jim's best friend, describes his love for Julie. Mike had been secretly in love with Julie for many years, but Julie was married and in love with Jim. After Jim's death, some of Mike's friends encouraged him to confess his feelings to Julie. Nonetheless, Mike followed the advices and expressed his feelings to her. It was not easy because he was very shy and a little reserved. Here is when Julie focused her eyes on Mike. At the beginning she had doubts because Mike had been her husband's best friend.

However, (Sparks 2004) introduces another kind of love: a dangerous love. Our author introduces Richard, a man depicted as a gentleman, almost like a

prince. Richard was a man with a perturbing past, his father was always drunk. As a boy, he witnessed discussions between his parents, and he was neglected many things that children normally need to grow up. For instance, he could not go out with his friends, he did not receive gifts for his birthday, not even a supporting word. He wanted to have a steady family, but it did not work out with his wife, Jessica, a woman who did not love him with the same intensity that Richard loved her and who had been unfaithful to him.

Then he met Julie, but he rejected her, and she let him know they could only be friends. After this Richard became obsessed because she resembled Jessica. He began to observe and follow her to know what he used to do, even to put cameras in her house, something that she ignored. When she realized what was happening with Richard, she got afraid and went to the police.

Julie had made the decision of staying with Mike, but Richard wanted to have her, so in the process he began to hurt people around her. He almost killed Julie's work partner, Andrea, and the policeman assigned for her protection. He shot Mike, but did not kill him, and, finally, he poisoned and shot Singer, Julie's dog.

(Sparks 2004)

**"Richard took another step toward her; his voice still gentle. "I didn't have a choice, Julie. You know that. He was controlling you, and I couldn't let that continue. But you are safe now. I'll take care of you".  
(p.480)**

**"Let me go!" She screamed. "Stay away from me."**

**"Think of all we can do together," he said. "We're two of a kind, you know. Survivors".**

**"We'll do nothing together!". She screamed. "I hate you!"**



**He pulled savagely on her hair again, bringing her to her knees.  
"Don't say that."**

**"I hate you!" She screamed again.**

**"I am serious," he said, his voice lower, more ominous. "I know  
you're upset, but I don't want to hurt you, Jessica!" She screamed.  
(p.484).**

At the end, Richard was killed by the police and also bitten by Singer, who miraculously, after being poisoned, protected Julie until the end of his life.

This tragic love theme teaches us that toxic or insane persons sometimes approaches us. Ignoring their true intentions, we open our heart and offer them our friendship. It can happen, but we must be attentive, otherwise we can suffer the consequences.

## Theme of Faith

Faith has always existed and still nowadays people have faith. Faith is nothing more than believing in ourselves, in something or in someone and that something we expect is going to happen, no matter the obstacles. It means that those who have faith believe that something they expect can come true or that they are going to receive the miracle expected; the petitions made, or dreams come true. When what is expected is given, then people continue believing in what faith can do. But, when what is expected is not given, people can lose their faith or keep on believing in it.

A passage in the bible by Hebrews 11:1 says: ***Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the sign that the things not seen are true.*** We can describe faith as that light of searching, about what we could not see, but we feel it through the power that is unseen inside that word.

Nicholas Sparks is an author whose faith in God has been reflected not only in his personal life but also in his profession as a writer. In his novels we can repeatedly appreciate faith as one of his main themes. He has never rejected it, on the contrary, he has tried to avoid obscene language or explicit sexual descriptions, as much as possible, because he thinks that to write them, does not match his writing style and his faith. Nonetheless, if this author describes sexual scenes in his books, he does not emphasize much on them.

## 5.5 Theme of Faith in The Notebook

In *The Notebook* our author introduces Noah as main character, a man of faith, who firmly believed in God. Even in his elderly years, he always believed that God had been so good that he had given him the opportunity to live and stay together with the love of his life, Allie, and who had also given him the chance to recover that love when they were separated by her family.

In *The Notebook*, Allie was diagnosed with Alzheimer and it was a difficult situation for her and her husband Noah. He used to pray every single day of his life during his elderly years asking for a miracle that could cure Allie, because the fact that she could not remember him, or his family anymore was sad and difficult. Even doctors and people around Noah did not believe what he expected to receive, but Noah was certain that it could be possible because God had heard him before when he asked Him to grant him the opportunity of seeing Allie again. (Sparks 1996) "I bow my head and pray silently for the strength I know I will need. I have always been a firm believer in God and the power of prayer, thought, to be honest, my faith has made for a list of questions I definitely want answered after I'm gone."  
(p.4)

We can see how (Sparks1996) wants to transmit the element of faith through his character "Noah." Here the autor presents Noah, as a fervent catholic with an astonishing faith who demonstrated it on every prayer, also with an objectivity that he thinks his miracle could arise by challenging any stereotipe:

**"I realize the odds, and science is not a total answer; this I know this I have learned in my lifetime. And that leaves me with a belief that miracles, no matter how inexplicable or unbelievable, are real can occur without regard to the natural order of things. So, once again, just as I do every day, I begin to read The notebook aloud, so that she can hear it, I the hope that the miracles that has come to dominate my life will once again prevail. "(P.5).**

Here is when (Sparks1996) introduces us the first miracle in this story, precisely the aspect where faith is reflected and shows that things are possible and occurs when someone as Noah has the same fervor to believe that miracles can happen. The incident happened when Noah's miracle came true for almost an instant and Allie could recognize him. After Noah had been reading her for some many years, months and days. Here we see how strong those prayers were:

**"Of course I do," she says breathlessly. "I have always loved you, Noah."**

**Noah, I hear again. Noah. The words echoes in my head. Noah... Noah. She knows, I think to myself, she knows who I am...**

**she knows... (p.189)**

Nicholas Sparks intends to let people understand through his books that everything is possible even in the most challenging times. He not only presented this miracle of faith in the story, but another one. (Sparks 1996) It happened when Allie remembers Noah for some minutes. Noah was so happy and afraid at the same time and Allie too. She did not want to forget Noah again but unfortunately; she forgets him again and suddenly she reacted violently getting into a crisis. Noah was so impressed that he could not stand this and when her crisis ended, he suffered a heart attack. Noah was so bad in the hospital that he was unable to continue his everyday activities and here is when the second miracle in this story happens. When he opened his eyes, he remembered Allie and it gave him the necessary strength to get better to see her again. When he felt better and went to see Allie again in the nursery home where she lived something incredible happened: she talked to him and recognized him. "Oh, Noah, ... I've missed you." another miracle – the greatest of all!- and there's no way I can stop the tears as we begin to slip toward heaven itself. ( p. 213)

This second miracle is interesting and proves that faith can go beyond any illness. Having faith is believing in the impossible and never giving up, as Noah did to get his miracle. Allie was old and very advanced in the disease and did not recognize him, that is why it is considered a miracle.

## 5.6 Theme of Faith in The Wedding

On the Other hand, there is another novel where Sparks continued creating magic. In *The Wedding*, which is a sequel of *The Notebook*, the theme of faith is not easily perceived at first sight because along the plot love dominates the scenes. Faith is reflected again through Noah. In *The Notebook* Allie had told Noah that If she would leave this world before, she was going to find a way to come back to him.

A month later, when Allie died, Noah used to sit by an artificial lake next to the asylum. He remembered her every single day and missed her a lot. One day a swan appeared in the lake and called Noah's attention. It came back every day and stayed near Noah. It was the same swan because it had a spot in his neck. Whenever he saw the swan, he began talking to it and doctors thought he was not right. Deep in his heart he felt the swan was Allie. Everyday Noah fed the swan with bread, but it did not eat when other persons gave it food. Little by little Noah felt the swan was Allie who had found the way to be with him, as she once said she would never let him alone.

One day Noah had a conversation with his son-in-law, Wilson, and he said:

**"I come here because she wants me to."**

**"The swan?"**

**"No," he said. "Allie"**

**"Allie wants you feed the swan?"**

**"Yes"**

**"How do you know ?"**

**with a sigh, he looked up at me. "It's her," he said. "who?"**

**"the swan," he said**

**I shook my head uncertainly ! I'm not sure what you're trying to say."**

**"Allie," he repeated. "She found a way to come back to me, just like she promised she would. All I had to do was find her." (p.154)**

This is a scene Where Noah explained to Wilson that Allie had been with him, at the beginning nobody believed what Noah had said, because that was impossible, also, Jane, one of Noah's daughter and Wilson's wife said that her mother would never be that swan because Allie did not like bread and, as stated before Noah fed the swan with bred crumbles.

However, miracles occur (Sparks 2003) when William and Jane had their surprising wedding, the same swam appeared in Noah's house, and everybody could see that it was the swan with the spot on the neck, it was the same swan that showed up in Noah's daughter wedding, the same swan that had swam from the nursery home to Noah's house. "I knew she hadn't left me," he said it simply." and I wanted to talk to her" "I think she came for the wedding. (p.274)

## 5.7 Theme of Faith in *A Walk to Remember*

A relevant aspect in *The Wedding* is Noah's faith in believing that the swan was Ally, that she looked for a way to be near him through a swan and that in this way they could be together again. Maybe it is not real, maybe it is just a product of Noah's imagination because he wants to believe that the swan was Allie, but what is true is that the swan was there, traveled from one place to another to meet Noah and to be with him in such an important day, Allie and Noah's daughter wedding. Noah was a man of faith, he expected a miracle, he expected to be with Allie again.

The theme of Faith is very well perceived in Nicholas Spark's book *A Walk to Remember*. It is seen throughout the main character in the story, Jamie Sullivan, an adolescent who was the living essence of what faith is. In this book the author introduces Jamie, an adolescent with an unbreakable faith who suffered a terminal disease as Leukemia in a love story together with Landon. Since the beginning of the story she demonstrated a steady and unbreakable faith in God, always putting into practice God's will to forgive, believe in Him, love and help each other but mainly to never stop believing that God is in control of any situation and that people live because of a reason.

Jamie, the main character in this story, was created to show the power of faith and acceptance to God's will. She firmly believed that she was the right person God had chosen to send a message of faith and love to others as she did with Landon Carter, a popular adolescent who lived a happy life without caring much for others. Landon learned a lesson of life with Jamie, he learned the meaning of love, sacrifice, faith and death. He knew God and learned to accept his will.

Perhaps Sparks wanted to show that People like Jamie are one of those that sometimes God send to change other people's life and see life from a new perspective. Consequently, it so substantial and significant to analyze some



phrases written in this book. Nonetheless, There are Phrases of Corinthians that were very significant for Jamie in this book, because it shows the real essence that represents Jamie's character. Jamie was a girl who did not keep resentment in her heart, never acted in the wrong way; on the contrary, she was the opposite; she helped, she prayed for others. If something happened, she used to say some phrases like it has to be "lord's plans or she would say, I will pray for you anyways. Also, without knowing them, she does not care about appearance; she cares about what was in her heart and the positiveness around her. She believed in true love.

**"Love is always patient and kind. It is never jealous. Love is never boastful or conceited. It is never rude or selfish. It does not take offense and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins, but delight in the truth. It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes." (p.215)**

This passage is from 1 Corinthians, that Sparks extracted from the bible to show a clear description of the nature of love. Analyzing these phrases of the book, we can deduce what God has instructed about this feeling.

In a romantic relationship or in any kind of relationships we must show love and understanding, be patient and kind as God's love is full of patience. Jealousy should not exist because it destroys people's spirits. Love should always be optimistic and even in the most difficult times stay firm and robust. Love is not a feeling of appearance; it is simply felt or not and should be demonstrated.

However (Sparks 1999) there is another interesting scene about Landon and Jamie. Here she lets him know that she was so scared meanwhile he expected to hear something different because she used to be a believer and optimistic. However, this is one of the tough moments when Landon started to pray for a miracle that could save Jamie's life. In all moments, Jamie showed that despair of being afraid, she did not want to make others feel worried or sad.

**"Aren't you frightened?"**

**Somehow, I expected her to say no, to say something wise like a grown up would, or to explain to me that we can't presume to understand the Lord's' plan.**

**She looked away. "yes," she finally said, "I'm frightened all the time."**

**"then why don't you act like it?"**

**"I do. I just do it in private."**

**"because you don't trust me?"**

**"no," she said, "because I know you're frightened, too."**

**I began to pray for a miracle**

**(p.200)**

Jamie had an immense impact on Landon's life before Jamie appears in his life. Landon did not know anything about God. However, before he got involved in Jamie's life, his curiosity began to increase and for that reason Landon started to get close to God throughout Jamie. Maybe he was looking for an answer, maybe for miracles. It is for that reason that every day he began to read different bible passages, and as much as he read he was more impressed about God's miracles. However, there was something which caught Landon's attention, and it was a passage that Jamie had underlined (Sparks1999)

**"I cry to you, my Lord, my rock! Do not be deaf to me, for if you are silent, I shall go down to the pit like the rest. Hear my voice raised in petitions as I cry to you for help as I raise my hands, my Lord, toward your holy of holies."(p.202)**

In this passage Landon felt that Jamie had underlined this passage for him.

There was a situation that needed to be settled down for Jamie and it was that her father every year presented a play in honor to his late wife's memory. In that play Jamie was going to act and it was going to be the last time before dying of leukemia. Her father needed a male character to accompany Jamie in the play so she began praying for Landon to accept the role in the play. At the end, Landon accepted to act together with Jamie and in the middle of the practices and the

presentation they fell in love. This fact shows that Jamie's faith in God was present in every detail of her life.

Nonetheless, there is another phrase ( Sparks 1999) present where, we could appreciate Jamie's faith. Jamie never regrets about his condition, but also her faith was intact and never changed.

**"Do you ever felt feel like Job?"**

**She smiled a little twinkle in her eyes.**

**"sometimes"**

**But you haven't lost your faith?"**

**"No," I knew she hadn't, but I think I was losing mine.**

**"it is because you think you might get better.**

**"No," she said, "it's because it's the only thing I have left."**

**After that, we started reading the bible together. It somehow seemed like the right thing to do, but my heart was nonetheless telling me that there still might be something more.( p206)**

Here we see Jamie with her unbreakable faith, in a conversation she had with Landon. Landon was commenting her that he had been reading some passages from the bible specifically from Job, despite the circumstances, having faith was something which made Jamie have the strength and courage and give her the power to continue with her life. Faith at that moment was something which made Jamie hold on and bring the support in hard moments where she needed it more. Nonetheless, faith was something which not only helped Jamie but also Landon's life and their relationship; It was like the relief they both needed. Faith was the way to speak with God and it gave Landon answers and hope for the miracle he hoped to receive. *Please, Lord, tell me what to do!(p.22)* This is a prayer that Landon did in a moment where he was exhausted and wanted to see answers

for helping Jamie when she was about to die, he wanted to do more for her, but he did not know what to do. Notwithstanding, God talked and guided Landon, to find it, when he read a passage from the bible; "I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it to the earnestness of others." (p.206)

This was the moment that God showed him what he needed to do. Despite this, he knew that she would die, Landon wanted to make her happy, is for that, he got married to Jamie, not only for making her happy if not because that was the purpose which God had. We can say that God uses Jamie like an angel to intercede and save Landon, and Landon was the strength that Jamie needed to overcome that prove. Landon was proof that people can change. Maybe throughout this couple, Sparks wanted to communicate that when loves is based on Christianity faith, It is eternal.

## 5.8 Theme of Faith in The Guardian

On the other hand, there is another book from Nicholas Sparks, "The Guardian" that presents the theme of faith.

Faith is reflected in this book, as a miracle in a dog named singer, that was given as a gift to Julie, our main character by her late husband. The dog was a Great Dane to always take good care of her.

Sparks introduces here the miracle, in this story through a dog, that possibilities to save his owner Julie in a moment was almost useless and there is no logical reason on it. Julie was almost Kidnapped for one of her suitors who created an obsession for her. when her dog Singer pounced on Richard biting his hand and receiving a shot that would probably have been for Julie, but the most impressive thing was that dog had consumed by Richard a very strong poison that would have ended with his life in minutes. However, here is when we can appreciate what (Sparks 2004) wants to transmit maybe there was something more who took the spirits of the dog that instant and maybe it was the promises that Julie's husband did to her to keep close of her.

**"She'd been told by the veterinarian that he'd been given rat poison, enough to kill six dogs within minutes." I don't understand it," Linda Patison, told Julie. "It was a miracle he was able to move at all, let alone fight with a grown man." (p.491).**

## 5.9 Theme of Faith in The Last Song

In *The Last Song*, the author introduces faith as a strong thematic within the plot of the story. Faith is reflected in Steve's character, Veronica's father and therefore in his daughter. However, Sparks wants to introduce faith theme in a man who was always looking and inquired himself about God's presence in his life. Nonetheless, Steve's life was not more comfortable. Since a little boy, he was that kind of kid very reserved and introverted with few friends, sometimes unable to express or share his feelings. Steve's parents were good parents a few stoic, but at the same time, maybe he would have liked to change some aspects of them, as to be opened with him, outgoing and share more their feelings. Therefore, these characteristics had an impact on Steve's personality, and the only way whom he found to fill the void, it was music and Pastor Harries a man who belongs to another religion who was for Steve not only a piano teacher but also a friend and a father for him.

**"I don't walk the beach to be alone, because that's not possible, I walk and talk with God."**

**"You mean pray?"**

**"I mean, talk. Never forget that God is your friend. And like all friends**

**"Does He answer"**

**"Yes," he said, but not with my ears." He put a hand to his chest.**

**"This is where I hear the answers. This is where I feel his presence."**

**(p.169)**

According to (Sparks 2009) we can see here, Steve surely had his doubts as to some people, about if God existed or was a friend of everyone. However, Steve was religious because of the influences of his mother, who was catholic and loved the church. Even Though that is doubts are the ones who were unknown for him and make him to inquired himself.

**What was it, he wondered the hundredth time, that enabled Pastor Harris to hear the answers in his heart? What did he mean he said he felt's God's presence? ( p.174)**

Maybe he asked himself it was possible that God speaks with someone and this person heard him or felt his presence, without seeing him or somehow feel it in his or her heart. Possibly he thought that somehow all their Doubts and the emptiness he felt one day he could find answers if it were just possible to speak and feel the presence of God in his life. Nonetheless, after all the ravages in Steve's life, Sparks during the book showed us and transmitted us, How Steve felt God's presence in his life.

**The search of God's presence, he understood now, was as much of a mystery as God himself, and what was God, if not Mystery? Funny though, that it took him so long to see it that way. (p.257)**

Here is when Sparks introduces how God can change life in a person, who has doubts about his existence, and it happens when this person star believing in it. Finally, Steve could conclude that God's presence was everywhere, and it is love that has been present in his life in a maximum pure expression throughout music, his sons, everything around him.

Nonetheless, Sparks makes reference not only about faith in Steve's character but also is in Veronicas. When she discovers the truth about her fathers' situation. Here is we see how Veronica gets involves and started to look at how to help his father, and during the way she could find that refuge and answers about what to do and get close with God.

There were some moments where at the beginning, Veronica felt so bad about some actions she did and hurt her father. However, there was a conversation with Pastor Harries who makes Veronica understand as humans we underestimate to make mistakes, as and let her understand that the most important is to learn from these mistakes and to do something special to recover the time lost.

**"He wants to know that you'll make good decisions. "**

**but I haven't always made good decisions."**

**Pastor Harris smiled. "All that shows is that you're human. He never expected perfection. But I do know how proud he is of a young woman you've become. (p.331).**

So, everyday Veronica decides to share the rest of the time with her father, like start again knowing him. Also, during the process, she starts reading the bible, and each time she reads the bible, she understood more things, allowing her to meet and spend time with her father again. However, Veronica was still waiting for something to amend her mistakes for that reason she prays to God for a miracle and at the end God answers her, in a crucial moment when she needs it. "She prayed fiercely for a miracle, a tiny one. And as though God himself were listening, It happened twenty minutes later. (386)

Veronica received a miracle, as a signal which let her what she had to do, to recover that time lost, it was to do something special for her and her dad. It was to finish their Last song and share that last moment.

However, (Sparks 2009) share in this book that after Steve passed away, there was another element of faith really present in this book. Moreover, it was a window whom Steve called "God Light after telling his sons not to cry that he will be forever with him and each time they see that window they would know that he is with them.

**"Every time the lights shine through the window we built or any window all, you'll know I'm right there with you, okay? That's going to be me. I'll be the light in that window." (p.359)**

Here is when Sparks through the main character Steve, presents an element of faith, and hope-giving to Steve's sons, that despair he will not physically with them, each time they see any window or that window, they will know that he will be there. "Hi, Daddy," She whispered. "I knew you would come." (p.394)



## 5.10 Theme of Sickness and Death

Sickness and death have been considered the most challenging and recurrent themes to analyze in Nicholas Sparks' novels because, in the majority of them, he used both themes sickness as a typical cause that affects people's life and death as a natural situation of loss.

In Nicholas Sparks' first novel *The Notebook* sickness and death is reflected when Allie, one of the main character is diagnosed Alzheimer, a sickness of the brain that causes confusion and gradual loss of memory. In the novel when Allie and Noah visited a doctor because Allie had some memory problems, the doctor said: "I am sorry to have to tell you this, Dr. Barewall began, but you seem to be in the early stages of Alzheimer's (p.167) Years later Allie dies because of this disease.

However, there are other books where (Sparks1999) introduces the same theme of sickness. In *A Walk To Remember* the main character Jamie Sullivan is diagnosed with Leukemia, a kind of cancer which affects the blood of the person and then the person dies because of it. "She had Leukemia; she'd known it since last summer." (p.191)

In addition, there is another novel where a character also dies of cancer that is reflected in the book *The Guardian*, this time cancer appears as the tumor in Jim's brain, Julie's first husband, ending his life. "A few weeks after their fourth anniversary, Jim had a seizure on the way home from church and was rushed to the hospital. Two years later, the brain tumor took his life. ( p.10)

In this novel the author also introduces a death theme. In this case an animal, Singer, the dog that saves Julie from Richard's attack. The dog, a Great Dane, had been given to her by her late husband to protect her and the dog did it.

In *The Last Song*, presents the same theme of cancer in Steve in Veronica's father. This cancer is diagnosed first in his stomach and then in the pancreas and lungs, finally ending with his life." You have stomach cancer," and the scans, it's metastasized to your pancreas and lungs." (p.316)

Sparks has felt attached to those themes because throughout his life he has experienced both. Nicholas' sister suffered a cancer disease and as a consequence she died. Nonetheless, Nicholas' parents both died in accidents. Maybe death and sickness have been an inspiration for Nicholas, and it is reflected in his books.

# CHAPTER VI

## CHAPTER VI: LITERARY DEVICES

In Nicholas Sparks books we can find some literary devices that contribute to create the author's structure in his novels. They enhance the stories replenishing it with beauty, symbolisms, ironies, foreshadowing, flashbacks, to make it easier for the writer to convey meaning and to fascinate the reader with their descriptions.

### 6.1. Setting

Setting is the time and place where the story takes place.

In Nicholas Sparks' novels the peaceful state of North Carolina was used as setting. This peaceful state and its different towns created perfect scenarios where the author set his novels.

The following places were located in North Carolina were mentioned in his novels:

#### *New Bern, North Carolina:*

The setting used by Nicholas Sparks in his first novel *The Notebook* and *The Weeding* was the picturesque New Bern in North Carolina. It was the perfect place for his stories because of its history, picturesque places, and lovely surroundings. Through imagery the reader could see the perfect setting to appreciate the books.

*Swansboro, North Carolina* better known as the city by the sea, is a small town where everybody knows each other, a perfect setting for the romantic thriller *The Guardian*. Swansboro is a charming place with a spectacular view to the sea, beautiful stores, restaurants, and people who practice outdoor activities.

*Beaufort, North Carolina* is the perfect scenario where Sparks presents *A Walk to Remember*, a quiet and quaint town very famous because of its seaport

town rich in maritime history. The place is where people go to spend summers and enjoy going shopping and eating out.

*Wilmington, North Carolina*: the author introduces this setting in his novel *The Last Song*, a perfect place to develop this story. It is a city where there are a lot of things to see and do. It is an active place perfect for young and older people. There are fascinating places like restaurants, stores, museums. Besides, there is a superb seaport.

## 6.2 Symbols

Another technique used by this author are the symbols. They can consist of objects or merely actions that have another meaning different from its literal sense.

In Nicholas Sparks' first Novel *The Notebook* we can find many symbols that are explained here:

Noah's father Guitar: It is considered a symbol because it symbolizes all the love Noah's father felt for him and a constant reminder of how much his father loved him and all the teachings Noah learned from him.

Leaves of Grass by Walt Whitman: Noah considered this book a significant one because he felt identified with the poems written by this author. Also, that book helped him to catch a bullet when he was in the war and it also saved his life; moreover, this book is symbolic because of the poetry that Noah read. It influenced Noah in his way of talking and behaving. He did not behave as other adolescents did. Also, there is a poem written by Whitman that Noah felt identified with

**(Sparks 1996) This is thy hour O Soul, thy free flight into the wordless,  
Away from books, away from art, the day erased, the lesson done,  
Thee fully forth emerging, silent, gazing, pondering the themes thou lovest  
best,  
Night, sleep, death and the stars.** (Sparks N. , *The Notebook*, 1996, p. 11)

Noah once said that he has always related New Bern with Whitman. In the above-mentioned poem we can interpret that at night a person rests from the daily activities. The silence is the perfect way to rest after a busy day. Maybe New Bern is the only place where Noah could find a peaceful and quiet land he enjoyed.

The old tree: The old tree is an essential symbol in *The Notebook* because it symbolizes the new life Noah and Allie were going to start.

**(Sparks 1996) "She remembered sitting beneath the tree on a hot July day with someone who looked at her with a longing that took everything else away. It had been at that moment that she'd first fallen in love."** (Sparks N. , *The Notebook*, 1996, p. 34)

Noah's picture: Noah's photo: it was a photo that Allie took during the summer. According to their relationship it changed throughout the summer, the image also changed according to the shape of the painting. This is a clear reflection of their endless relationship.

**(Sparks1996)**

**"You kept it "**

**" Of course, I kept it. It is wonderful."**

**She gave him a skeptical look, and he explained. It makes me feel alive when I look at it** (Sparks N. , *The Notebook*, 1996, p. 63)

Tundra Swans and Canada geese: These animals represent not only the magic of Nature but also the magic moments that Allie and Noah used to share.

Water: In *The Notebook* water has been considered as an essential element of transformation, purification, renewal, and power. In this book water symbolizes life in his maximum expression. However, it also signifies a gift from God.

**( Sparks 1996) "There's something special, almost mystical about spending dawn on the water, he thought to himself, and he did it almost every day now."** (Sparks N. , *The Notebook* , 1996, pág. 87)

Birds: Many birds appear in *The Notebook*, which symbolizes freedom.

Swans: In *The Notebook*, swans have different meanings. Swans can symbolize not only fidelity and purity but also light, death, beauty, passion and melancholy. Also, they can represent grace and nobility. They are the reminders of nature soul. It is like a metamorphosis in this story. These animals do not separate; we can compare it with Allie and Noah's relationship.

Painting: Allie's paintings are symbolic because they represent the thoughts, dreams and feelings she could not express in words. The paintings drawn by Allie also represent the autonomy and choice she once showed when she decided to get married with Noah.

Nature: Nature is a symbol that represents serenity in *The Notebook*. It is where the real essence of life can be seen. A natural environment invites us to reflect means the principal change of movement or continuation of life.

We can appreciate a simple example in *The Notebook* where our main character thinks about nature and expresses what nature makes him feel.

***(Sparks 1996) Noah listened to the crickets and the rustling leaves, thinking that the sounds of nature were more real and aroused more emotions than things like cars and planes. Natural things gave back more than they took, and their sounds always brought him back to the way man was supposed to be. (Sparks N. , The Notebook , 1996, p. 10)***

The white house: The white house is where Allie and Noah lived before moving to the homecare. It has a special meaning because it represents Noah and Allie's memories, their promises and dreams and their life together. When Allison's illness worsened, she needed specialized medical attention and Noah wanted Allie to spend the last days of her life in a beautiful place. He moved Allie to a homecare next to a lake with beautiful nature surrounding it, similar to the



white house they used to live. Noah moved there together with Allie. As Pliny the elder said: home is where the heart is.

The letters: Letters have always been considered a way of expressing people's feelings and emotions. In *The Notebook* Noah wrote dozens of letters to Allie confessing his love for her for two years. The letters symbolize the love between the couple.

The Notebook: It is precisely the diary where Noah writes down everything that happens in his life. It is where Noah writes about his emotions, sickness, frustrations. It is the way to travel back through his memories to keep them alive, especially when Allie suffers the terrible consequences of Alzheimer. So, they could bring back the emotions once shared.

On the other hand, in *The Wedding* we can find other symbols that are very significant in the story, those that we cannot see at first sight, for example: the swan, the house and the garden.

Noah and Allie's house: This house in *The Wedding* represented how bad Wilson and Jane's relationship was. Because, This house was practically abandoned and uncaring, after Allie and Noah decided to leave to the nursery place. However, the house in this story is a symbol that represents the characters. Nonetheless it also represents the first time Wilson realized he was in love with Jane, Noah and Allie's daughter from *The Notebook*.

Garden of roses in *The Notebook*: Noah had built a big garden of roses for Allie. However, when Noah and Allie moved for the nursery home this garden was abandoned and all the beautiful roses dried.

In *The Wedding* when Noah's son-in-law, Wilson, arrived to fix Allie and Noah's house, he found the garden dead. This garden of roses symbolized Wilson's problems in his own marriage, almost dying.

A swan with a spot : Represents Noah's wife who dies a month after the first apparition of the swan in the lake.

In *A walk to Remember* there are interesting symbols worth mentioning.

Jamie as an angel for Landon: Jamie came to Landon's life when he was lonely and confused. He experienced a positive change when he met her. Through Jamie he knew the power of true love, to be understanding and loving toward people in need, and to appreciate the simple things of life. She introduced Landon to God and learned to give Him thanks for everything he had, especially for having Jamie with him.

The Bible: It was a treasure for Jamie because it was her parents' wedding gift. This book had accompanied Jamie's mother in her most difficult times, as it also happened in Jamie's difficult moments too. Likewise, the bible symbolizes the important connection between Jamie and Landon and God.

The Orphanage: This place is symbolic in the story because it is where Landon experienced a change. He realized he was in love with Jamie. In that place he knew a reality he ignored. He saw how lonely the children in that place felt. He was astonished when he saw children painting on newspapers instead of using coloring books or without gifts for Christmas, growing up without a family to support them in life.

In that orphanage we can find another symbolism, the moment when Jamie held in her lap a little girl, resembling the Virgin Mary with Jesus.

The walk to remember. It symbolizes the moment Jamie walks from the entrance of the church to the altar to marry Landon. Definitely a walk to remember! It may also symbolize the special moments lived from our birth to our death during

our life, those moments that we treasure and keep in our mind and heart. When we look back, we will remember them.

Another story that has symbolic elements is “The Guardian.”

Singer, the dog: Dogs are considered man’s best friend. They show unconditional love and fidelity. In *The Guardian*, Singer symbolizes all these characteristics. Likewise, it symbolizes Julie’s deceased husband who promised to take care of her and who did it through Singer.

Reliquary: Richard gave a reliquary to Julie as a gift. This reliquary represents another opportunity for Richard to start a new life with Julie. It belonged to Richard’s wife who suddenly disappeared.

Mike: Mike is seen in this story as a symbol of trust, true love, protection, and friendship.

The *Last Song* presents other curious symbols really important to add here.

Piano: The piano symbolizes the connection between Veronica and her father Steve. It was a refuge to alleviate their souls. It represents their spirits and love.

The stained-glass window or “God’s Light”: The stained-glass window is a symbol that represents Steve. During his last summer Steve spent time with his son and was working together with him fixing one of the stained-glass windows from the church. Then a fire started, and Steve was made responsible for it. Even though he had nothing to do with the fire, Steve offered to rebuild the glass again. In his last day of life, Steve told his son and daughter that each time they see the window, they would see him.

Purple lock of hair: Veronica's purple lock of hair represents her nonconforming behavior typical of a rebel teenager. She had it at the beginning of the story. In the middle of it, we can see a change in Veronica's life, and after experiencing good and bad situations, she did not paint her lock of hair purple anymore.

Azalea Flower: Nicholas Sparks mentions the azalea flower in two novels, *A Walk To Remember* and *The Last Song*. This is a beautiful flower that can be found in different colors. They can be pink, white, red or yellow and every color has a different meaning.

The following is the connection of the azalea flower with situations found in the story:

In *A Walk to Remember* the author mentions the pink and white azalea flowers. The white azalea symbolizes summer love as the love felt by Jamie and Landon during the summer. The pink azalea symbolizes maternity and puberty relating it to Jamie's mother and her tenderness toward her daughter.

In *The Last Song* the red azalea symbolizes forgiveness as Ronnie forgave William, Veronica's father and her best friend Galadriel. The white azalea symbolizes summer love as the love felt by Veronica and William.

### 6.3 Ironies

Ironies are those situations and facts that turn out to be the contrary from what we expect. In Nicholas Sparks' books we can find fascinating ironies. Some of them are mentioned below.

A situational irony happened in the novel *A Walk to Remember* because some characters did not expect Landon, not even him, to fall in love and marry Jamie Sullivan, and he did when he discovered how wonderful she was.

Landon was attractive and sociable but not a good student. Sometimes he joined bad guys and exhibited bad manners or inappropriate conduct toward people, sometimes toward the pastor. He was rebel with his parents and usually misbehaved to call people's attention. On the contrary, Jamie was the shyest, unpopular, and most religious girl in school, considered weird by her classmates. The teachers said that if there were many girls like Jamie, this world would be a better place.

Landon's family did not get along well with Jamie's family. In the past Landon's grandfather had stolen lands from Jamie's family as well other people in town and because of this the relationship was not good. In addition, Landon personally disliked the pastor. The following is a conversation he had with Jamie about her father:

**"What's it like, living with your father? is he like how he is in church?"**

**"No. He's actually got a pretty good sense of humor."**

**"Hegbert?" I blurted out. I couldn't even imagine it.**

**I think she was shocked to hear me call him by his first name, but she let me off the hook and didn't respond to my comment. Instead she said," Don't look so surprised. You'll like him, once you get to know him."**

**"I doubt if I'll ever get to know him."(116)**

**"You never know, Landon." She said, smiling," what the lord's plan is." (pág. 116)**

Another situational irony identified in *The Guardian* is when Richard was about to kidnap and kill Julie and nobody expected anyone to save her. Singer, the dog appeared and saved Julie's life. The readers were sure that Singer was poisoned and dead. *"As the vision before her eyes took shape, Julie watched as*

*Singer launched himself at Richard, snarling, his jaw clamping down on the arm holding the gun.” (p. 487)*

Later, the veterinarian told Julie that it had been a miracle that Singer had attacked Richard because the dog was given so much venom for rats to kill him immediately. The dog was already dead when Julie found him. It was what the readers thought.

A verbal irony is identified in *The Guardian* when Julie found Singer almost dying and was desperately looking for help to save him; suddenly Richard showed up with a gun in his hand and ironically said smiling:

**“ Hello Julie**

**“ You...,” was all she could manage to say.**

**Of course, he seemed to say, who were you expecting?( 479)**

#### 6.4 Allusions in Nicholas Sparks' books

There are some allusions that are so important to mention here. Allusions are of one of those who make references about telling a story, that allow the reader to see some things that are commons, but we do not see it. One of the book we can appreciate it, it is the last song.

Veronica's Nemo sweater: In *The Last Song*, after William threw his drink in Veronica's sweater, she bought another one. The new sweater had the image of Disney's orange Nemo (Finding Nemo movie). So here the author presents an allusion. Nemo in the cartoon was trying to reunite and find his dad. The same situation happens with Veronica. Indirectly she longed to find her father and if she was given the opportunity, she would have gone to find him.

Ana Karenina: In *The Last Song* when William recited Veronica some lines from Leo Tolstoy's *Ana Karenina*, he was indirectly referring to the fact that sometimes families that seem to be perfect, the truth is that they are not. In this Russian novel, *Ana Karenina*, Anna who was married to Alexey Alexandrovitch Karenin, had a normal marriage. But she met Count Vronsky, and they fell in love. Anna became his mistress and her family is affected by the separation.

The allusion to Anna Karenina is interesting in *The Last Song*, because something similar happens in Veronica's family. At first sight this was a happy family as everybody in town believed it to be. But Veronica's mother fell in love with another man, and her family was affected by the separation. Steve asked for a divorce, he left the house, but even though he continued in contact with his son and daughter through e-mails, letters, and phone calls everything had changed.

In addition, William's family was considered perfect, but people ignored they suffered in silence for his brother's death.

**“ Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way,”** (Sparks N. , *The Last Song*, 2009, p. 131)

The Bible: In *The Last Song* Veronica asks her father if he had read anything lately that he would like to comment, and he answered that he had read the Bible, specifically Galatians 5:22 and he began reading the passage for her:

“But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, He will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” (p.362)

While meditating about the biblical passage, Veronica understood that her father had let the Holy Spirit act in his heart. Only God could have given her father the capacity to manage himself wisely in critical circumstances and to have shown

love, patience and kindness to his family during all his life. She was a witness of his self-control.

### 6.5. Comparisons

There some comparison where our author Nicholas Sparks wrote in his novels

The first one when Noah makes a comparisons between Noah and Allie's love and the dusk.

**"It was late afternoon , with red streaks cutting the summer sky , and the last remnants of the day were fading. The sky was slowly changing color, and as I was watching the sun go down, I remember thinking about that brief, flickering moment when the day suddenly turn into night. Dusk, I realized then, is just an illusion, because the sun is either above the horizon or below it. And that means that day and night are linked in a way that few things are; there cannot be one without the other, yet they cannot exist at the same time .How would it feel, I remembering, to be always together, yet forever apart? (Nicholas Sparks, 1996, p. 176)**

Here we can see how Noah makes a comparison between day and night and the sunset. He explained that night cannot exist without the day and vice versa. The existing love between Allie and Noah is the same as day and night, they cannot exist without each other.

Nonetheless, in *The Notebook*, there is a phrase that (Sparks1996) wrote through Noah, who compares his love toward an ancient ivy:

(Sparks 1996) "Who are we. Allie and I? Are we ancient ivy on cypress trees, tendrils, and branches intertwined so closely that we would both die if were forced apart? (Sparks N. , *The Notebook* , 1996, p. 201) This phrase makes and compares the love between Noah and Allie.



## 6.7. Simile

- **She had “eyes like ocean waves.”** (Sparks N. , The Notebook, 1996, p. 19)
- **“From a distance, the groups of swans looked almost like icebergs.”** (Sparks N. , The Notebook, 1996, p. 107)
- **He'd turn this bright shade of red, like he'd just drunk gasoline, and the big green veins in his neck would start sticking out all over, like those maps of the amazon river that you see in National geographic.** (Sparks N. , A Walk To Remember , 1999, p. 4)
- **We'd giggle like idiots, like we were the wittiest creatures ever to inhabit the planet** (Sparks N. , A Walk To Remember , 1999, p. 4).
- **Andrea filed her nails, like a human belt sander.** (Sparks N. , The Guardian , 2004, p. 98)
- **It's not every day that a guy like Richard comes along, handing out gifts like a politician spending Christmas.** (Sparks N. , The Guardian, 2004, p. 100)

## 6.8 Point of view

In *The Notebook*, the story is told by Noah, or a first-person participant point of view. In *A Walk To Remember*, the story is told by Landon or a first-person participant point of view. In *The Wedding* Wilson is the first-person participant point of view. In *The Guardian* the narrator is a third-person omniscient. In *The Last Song*, there are different narrators; we find Steve and Ronnie as narrators and also a third-person omniscient.

## 6.9 Flashbacks

In *A walk to Remember* Landon decides to share his love story and starts writing about the love that changed his life forever. In the prologue through a flashback he goes back in time and starts telling the story since he was 17 years old until now.

## 6.10 Conflict

Conflicts are the problems that the main character face between opposing characters or forces in the story.

Nicholas Sparks presents some conflicts in different parts of his novel for example:

### *The Notebook*

Man vs. Man : This conflict is depicted in the story when Allie and Noah wanted to be together, but Allie's parents did not allow it to happen and they moved to another city. In spite of it, Noah wrote Allie many love letters, but her mother hid each one of them.

Man vs. Society: In *The Notebook* Allie was rich and Noah poor presenting a true conflict in the story.

### *A Walk To Remember*

Man vs. Society: When Landon's friends began to ask him about his friendship with Jamie who everybody in the school thought she was weird, he showed and demonstrated that she was not.

Man vs. Man: Landon's family and Jamie's family did not get along well, because in the past they had had some differences. Finally, they had to overcome their differences.

### *The Guardian*

Man vs Man: Julie has to protect herself from the man she was dating, because Richard was obsessed with her and she realized he was dangerous.

Another conflict is shown when Mike confronts Richard for Julie's love.

Man vs Self: Julie has to make a decision. She must decide if she really wants to remarry and to choose between Mike and Richard.

Man vs Society: Richard has to confront other characters who accused him of assassination to hide his real intentions.

*The Last Song*

Man vs. Himself: Here Veronica, our main character, has to forgive herself and others around her.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present work is to show the analysis of the themes of love, faith, death and hope found in four novels written by our author Nicholas Sparks, a writer who despite having a difficult life, never gave up nor lost his faith when facing hard moments. His personal life is a true example of hard work and faith.

Nicholas Spark's books have attracted many readers because they have shown difficult aspects of life that people may face, and how through forgiveness, love, faith and hope, they can overcome them, to continue living in peace, experiencing second chances, and getting ahead in life.

Our love for literature can help us discover treasures in life. Books can teach us how to manage situations and be a guide to our life. We can learn, have experience and even discover how to solve problems. Incredibly Nicholas Sparks has been a good teacher through his books and the present work an evidence of it.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Gibran, K. (2019). *Poetry Foundation*. Obtenido de Poetry Foundation:  
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/148576/on-marriage-5bff1692a81b0>
- Gibran, K. (n.d.). *Your inter Faith Wedding*. Retrieved from Your Inter Faith Wedding:  
[http://www.yourinterfaithwedding.com/kahlil\\_gibran\\_wedding\\_readings\\_106984.htm](http://www.yourinterfaithwedding.com/kahlil_gibran_wedding_readings_106984.htm)
- Learning, G. C. (n.d.). *A Study Guide for Nicholas Sparks's "The Wedding"*. Farmington Hills,: Gale, Cengage Learning.
- Nicholas Sparks. (1996). *The Notebook*. New York, Boston : Grand Central Publishing.
- Shakespeare, W. (2019). *E Notes*. Obtenido de E Notes:  
<https://www.enotes.com/homework-help/what-does-this-poem-mean-let-me-not-to-the-110889>
- Sparks, N. (1996). *Nicholas Sparks*. Obtenido de Nicholas Sparks :  
<https://nicholassparks.com/stories/the-notebook/#book>
- Sparks, N. (1996). *The Notebook*. New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1996). *The Notebook*. New York: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1996). *The Notebook*. New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1996). *The Notebook*. New York , Boston: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1996). *The Notebook*. New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1996). *The Notebook* . New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1996). *The Notebook* . New York,Boston : Grand Central, Publishing.

- Sparks, N. (1996). *The Notebook* . New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1999). *A Walk To Remember*. New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1999). *A Walk To Remember* . New York, Boston : Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1999). *A Walk To Remember* . New York, Boston : Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1999). *A Walk To Rememeber*. New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (1999). *Nicholas Sparks*. Obtenido de Nicholas Sparks:  
<https://nicholassparks.com/stories/a-walk-to-remember/#book>
- Sparks, N. (2003). *Nicholas Sparks*. Obtenido de Nicholas Sparks:  
<https://nicholassparks.com/stories/the-wedding/#book>
- Sparks, N. (2003). *The Weeding* . New York Boston : Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (2004). *Nicholas Sparks*. Obtenido de Nicholas Sparks:  
<https://nicholassparks.com/stories/the-guardian/#inspiration>
- Sparks, N. (2004). *The Guardian*. New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (2004). *The Guardian*. New York, Boston : Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (2004). *The Guardian* . New York: Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (2004). *The Guardian* . New York , Boston : Grand Central Publishing.
- Sparks, N. (2004). *The Guardian* . New York, Boston: Grand Central publishing .
- Sparks, N. (2009). *Nicholas Sparks*. Obtenido de Nicholas Sparks:  
<https://nicholassparks.com/stories/the-last-song/>
- Sparks, N. (2009). *The Last Song*. New York, Boston: Grand Central publishing.

Sparks, N. (2009). *The Last Song*. New York, Boston : Grand Central publishing .

Sparks, N. (2009). *The Last Song*. New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Sparks, N. (2009). *The Last Song*. New York, Boston: Grand Central Park .

Sparks, N. (2009). *The Last Song*. New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Sparks, N. (2016). *An Interview with Nicholas Sparks*. Retrieved from Cliffs Notes: <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/n/the-notebook/an-interview-with-nicholas-sparks>

Sparks, N. (2019). *Teen Reads*. Retrieved from Teen Reads: <https://www.teenreads.com/reviews/a-walk-to-remember/praise>

Sparks, N. (2019). *teen reads* . Retrieved from teen reads : <https://www.teenreads.com/reviews/the-notebook/praise>

Sparks, N. S. (2004). *Three Weeks With My Brother*. New York Boston : Grand Central Publishing.

Tzu, L. (2019). *Brainy Quote*. Obtenido de Brainy Quote: [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/lao\\_tzu\\_387058](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/lao_tzu_387058)

Nicholas Sparks and Micah Sparks. (2004). *Three Weeks with My Brother*. New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks and Micah Sparks . (2004). Chapter I. En *Three Weeks with My Brother*(13). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks and Micah Sparks . (2004). Chapter I. En *Three Weeks with My Brother*(15). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks and Micah Sparks. (2004). Chapter 10. En *Three Weeks with My Brother*(159). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks and Micah Sparks. (2004). Chapter 6. En *Three Weeks with my brother*(84). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.



Nicholas Sparks. (1996). Reunion. En The Notebook(59). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1996). Reunion. En The Notebook(47). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1996). Moving Water. En The Notebook(102). New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1996). Swans and Storm. En The Notebook (121-122). New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (2003). Prologue. En The Wedding (3). New York , Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (2003). Chapter One. En The Wedding(25). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (2003). Chapter Sixteen. En The Wedding(266). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 6. En A Walk to Remember(99). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 2. En A Walk to Remember(44). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 4. En A Walk to Remember(74). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 9. En A Walk to Remember(154). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 12. En A Walk to Remember(234). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 12. En A Walk to Remember(230-232). New York ,Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1996). Miracles. En The Notebook (4). New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1996). Miracles. En The Notebook (5). New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1996). Winter for two. En The Notebook (189). New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1996). Winter for two. En The Notebook (213). New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (2003). Chapter Nine. En The Wedding(154). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (2003). Chapter Eighteen. En The Wedding(274). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 12. En A Walk to Remember(215). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 12. En A Walk to Remember(200). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 12. En A Walk to Remember(202). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 12. En A Walk to Remember(206). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 1. En A Walk to Remember(22). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (2004). Epilogue. En The Guardian(491). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing .

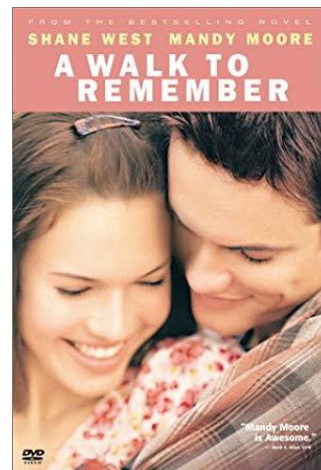
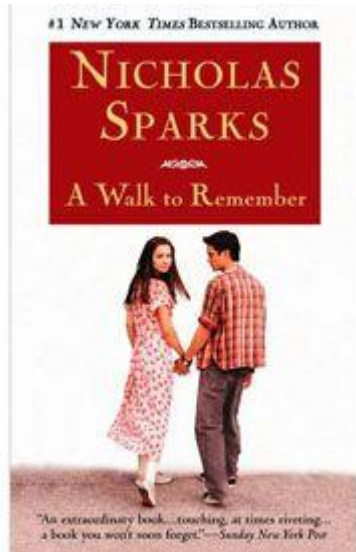
Nicholas Sparks. (1996). Winter for Two. En The Notebook (167). New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (1999). Chapter 12. En A Walk to Remember(191). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

Nicholas Sparks. (2004). One. En The Guardian(10). New York, Boston: Grand Central Publishing .

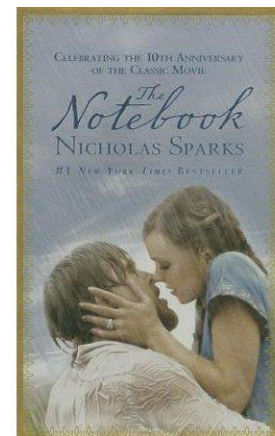
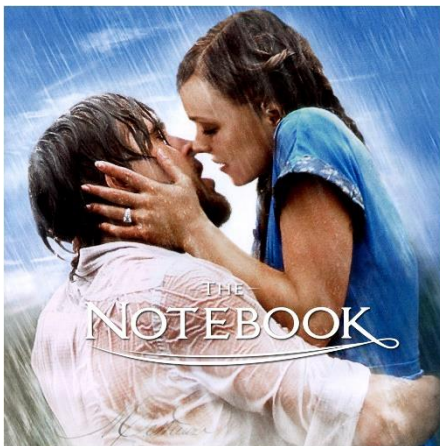
Nicholas Sparks. (2009). Steve. En The Last Song(316). New York Boston: Grand Central Publishing

# **ANNEX**



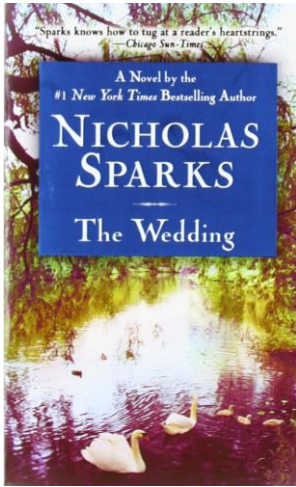
Pictures from the book and movie

*A Walk to Remember*



Pictures from the book and movie

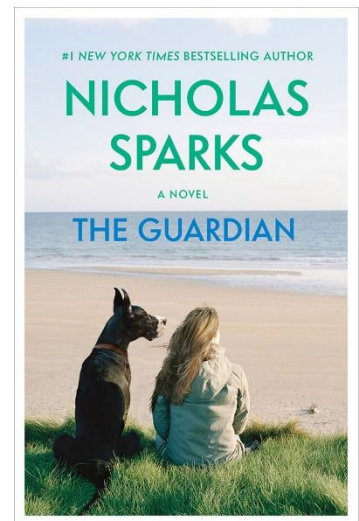
*The Notebook*



Pictures from the book "The Wedding"

Pictures from the book

"The Guardian"



Pictures from the book

*The Last Song*

